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The Week

PRESIDENT Roosevelt's dramatic plan for reorganizing the federal judiciary was by far the most important domestic news of the week ending February 9. Although his suggestions apply to the entire federal bench, the greatest interest centered about the proposals under which the Supreme Court might be increased to a maximum of fifteen Justices provided its members declined to retire within six months after reaching the age of seventy. Inquiries among the members of Congress indicated that the proposal would probably pass the House by a wide margin and the Senate by a narrow one. Washington reports stated that if this were done, the President would propose new legislation closely paralleling the invalidated NRA and AAA and perhaps also simple legislation against child labor. . . . The deadlock in the General Motors strike remained unbroken, though Governor Murphy of

Michigan professed himself hopeful of an early settlement. The United Automobile Workers had offered to accept peace terms under which the union would be the spokesman in only twenty plants, but Messrs. Sloan and Knudsen were reported as refusing to accept the UAW as the sole agency for collective bargaining in any plant. . . . The crest of the flood moved into the Mississippi, with Cairo, Illinois, still the point of greatest danger and with the expectation that it would be another three weeks before the maximum height would be reached at New Orleans. . . . The President submitted to Congress a six-year public-works plan prepared by the National Resources Board, to cost in all about five billions. . . . The Roosevelt administration lost one of its ablest executives in the fields of power policy and conservation with the resignation of Morris Cooke, of the Rural Electrification Administration.

THE rebels scored an important victory in the Spanish war by the capture of Malaga. They now have a naval base from which they can attack Alicante and Valencia, and they can curtail and perhaps prevent the arrival of war materials from across the Atlantic. The capture was achieved, it is reported, with the aid of 15,000 Italian troops, and there were no Spaniards at all in the first rebel forces to enter the city. If anyone ever believed that the Anglo-Italian agreement would cut down Italy's interference in the war, he can do so no longer. . . . A new purge of the Communist Party in Soviet Russia was reported, unequaled in scope for many years, as the bitter public debate between Trotskyists and Stalinites continued in other parts of the world, and the United States in particular. . . . The new Japanese Cabinet proceeded cautiously, trying to walk a middle course, amid general predictions that it could not survive longer than a few months. . . . Germany was reported to have relieved her food shortage somewhat through the confiscation of all remaining foreign securities owned by her citizens, and the use of these to purchase wheat and corn abroad. What she will do a few months hence, now that this last foreign resource is ended, no one knows.

THE filing of impeachment proceedings against an Alabama sheriff as the result of the lynching of a nineteen-year-old Negro last week was at such vari-

ance with the customary procedure in such cases that it attracted nationwide attention. We congratulate Governor Graves for his quick action in summoning a special grand-jury session to investigate the crime but, in the light of past experience, we shall be surprised if anything happens to the members of the mob. "In not one case in ten," says a report of the Committee on Interracial Coöperation, "is an effective effort made by the authorities to identify and prosecute the members of lynching mobs." It seems plain to us that the only way to wipe out the crime of lynching is by federal action. The opponents of such action—notably those Southern Senators who filibustered against the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill in 1935—contend that it would violate states' rights. The general scope of the measure, however, has a clear basis in the due-process and equal-protection clauses of the Constitution. The several states of the South have had time enough to enact anti-lynching laws such as the one passed by Virginia a decade ago, but have not done so. There has not been a single lynching in Virginia, incidentally, since that law was passed. An increasing number of Southerners favor the enactment of a federal anti-lynching bill. The Richmond, Virginia, Times-Dispatch last week printed a long editorial in favor of the bill. Its passage, however, will depend almost entirely upon the bloc of Southern Senators. The issue is thus left squarely up to them.

NOW that the Pacific Coast maritime unions have held their referendum and gone back to work it is well to recall how the ninety-eight-day strike began. The shipowners refused to renew agreements without arbitration of certain basic conditions already won by the men, for example, the union hiring-hall for longshoremen. The unions refused to arbitrate them, since they considered such matters fundamental to their existence. After several postponements of a break the seven unions of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific completely tied up Pacific Coast shipping. Now the strike has been settled on terms to which the unions would have agreed long ago—but first the employers tried in every way to break the strike. They tried to set one union against the others; they tried spies and provocators; they tried the Red scare. It cost them some \$7,000,000 a day—the total cost of the strike was about half a billion—to try these things, and none of them worked. Five unions won increases of from \$10 to \$15 in basic wage scales, five (excluding the two officers' unions) won or retained control of their hiring halls, and every union improved conditions to the highest standard American maritime workers have ever had. The union men have learned their lesson well. But it is impossible to know whether the employers have learned theirs. They may be acquiescing only in preparation for a fresh attack on the Federation. Or they may, as we earnestly hope, have accepted the union as a democratic instrument for practical collective bargaining.

THE boys who live in the slums and tenement districts are generally pretty tough. They throw rocks and say nasty things to little girls and chalk words on the sidewalk. Their heroes are likely to be ball-players and gangsters and when they grow up they sometimes engage in the less respectable professions—like prizefighting, racketeering or simply hanging around. Their homes are poor and drab and dingy. Their parents and relatives are the people who carry the burden of our economic structure, and whatever dignity or hope life may have has long since been crushed out of them. This is not the stuff, in short, of which rental-library fiction is made. Mr. James T. Farrell, born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, has put the experience of his early life into a trilogy, "Studs Lonigan," and into a more recent novel, "A World I Never Made." Mr. John S. Sumner, who cannot conceivably know anything about the life of which Mr. Farrell is writing, charges that Mr. Farrell's last book is guilty of obscene language and should therefore be suppressed. We think that the people who don't like to read short words in books should know that Mr. Farrell's novel has several of them: but, on the other hand, we also feel that the people who want to know what life on the Chicago South Side is like should be permitted to buy Mr. Farrell's book. The issue, as we see it, is not whether Mr. Farrell's book should be suppressed but whether you can suppress the language and behavior of the people who have to live in the slums. You can't—and in writing truthfully about such people Mr. Farrell is serving more than the cause of literature.

NEW BEDFORD, Massachusetts, is figuring in the news these days not as the classic whaling town of old but as a focal point for the sweatshops that are now invading New England. Since the NRA was outlawed by the Supreme Court there has been a steady deterioration in wage-and-hour standards all over the country. In New England, large textile factories are rented out piecemeal to irresponsible manufacturers who proceed to exploit labor on terms hitherto thought to exist only in some of the more oppressed areas of the South. A random batch of pay envelopes from New Bedford shows that girls working a forty-eight-hour week make such sums as \$5, \$6.12, \$4.95, \$7.19, \$5.88, \$4.79, \$10.15, \$4.77 and \$7.57. These figures contrast with the NRA minimum—which was low enough in itself—of \$13 for a forty-hour week. It is small wonder that the workers are making a determined effort to organize and that several strikes already have been called in New Bedford. The new-style sweatshop proprietor tends to get away from the large cities, and the relative lightness and portability of the machinery used in the cotton-garment trades aids them to do this. Frequently chambers of commerce and similar organizations offer inducements to sweatshops, under the impression that the town will benefit from "new industries," only to discover what a blighting effect upon the health and prosper-

ity of a community is exerted by starvation wages, long hours and the use of children as "learners."

RECENT news about civil liberties: In asking a new appropriation for its investigation, the La Follette Senate subcommittee on civil liberties reported that "espionage has become the habit of American management" and has made freedom of speech and of assembly "meaningless phrases." In the committee's latest session the Pinkerton National Detective Agency refused to disclose the names of its operatives, while acknowledging labor-espionage activities. . . . As a result of a conference held in San Antonio, Texas, between representatives of the Confederation of Mexican Workers and the Texas Federation of Labor, Mexican workers in the state of Texas will, in future, be admitted into the unions of the Texas Federation on a basis of full equality with Americans. . . . Arthur Garfield Hays has filed an assault-and-battery suit against Mayor Frank Hague and other officials of Jersey City. He is asking \$2,500 on charges arising from the breaking up of picket lines during the recent seamen's strike. . . . The appeal of Angelo Herndon, the young Negro Communist, against a sentence of eighteen to twenty years on a Georgia chain gang, was heard in the United States Supreme Court on February 8. No decision is expected for several weeks. . . . Leo Gallagher, noted labor attorney, was notified recently that proceedings against him by the State Bar of California, arising from his campaign last fall for the office of Superior Court Judge, had been dropped. Charges had been brought against him on November 24, and were followed by continued protests from individuals and organizations.

Curbing the Supreme Court

PRESIDENT Roosevelt's message calling for legislation to reform the federal judiciary contains a number of recommendations concerning the lower courts which meet with general approval—such as that injunctions involving the federal government shall not be granted until the Attorney General has had a chance to be heard, that constitutional questions shall have precedence in going to the Supreme Court, and that various other measures shall be taken to expedite business. A bitter controversy rages, however, about his proposal to enlarge the Supreme Court to a possible fifteen members by new appointments—this proposal taking the technical form that when a Justice who has reached the age of seventy does not retire, an additional one may be appointed. (Six out of the nine Justices have now attained this age.) Opposition comes not only from the Right, as would be expected, but from the Left as well. In order to get our bearings in this argument, it would be well to begin by stating the major premises from which we proceed.

During recent years—and not only since the New Deal began—the Supreme Court has invalidated

on constitutional grounds an increasing number of progressive measures involving social or economic issues. Their votes in so doing have been, more often than not, narrow majorities. In almost all cases competent authorities, including some of the learned Justices themselves, have believed it both possible and logical to take the opposite view. There is nothing in the words of the Constitution itself that would have necessitated the action taken. The result has proceeded rather from the views of individual Justices, conditioned as they are by varying traditions, environments and prejudices. It is undeniable that if the Court had been differently constituted, different decisions would have flowed from it. The Court is therefore not an infallible and wholly independent agency of government dispensing absolute justice, but a body which, according to its lights, frequently makes political decisions. However concealed may be the political motive, it is almost invariably there; the political consequences of its constitutional judgments are obvious to all. It is furthermore obvious that the general trend of these decisions is conservative; that taken all in all they prevent the other branches of government from acting to alleviate social and economic ills.

So drastic and far-reaching have been a number of these recent decisions that most informed persons are hopeless that government will be able to cope with the tasks thrust upon it in the modern world so long as we have the same Supreme Court as now or so long as we have the same Constitution. A crisis of some sort is upon us. Something has to be done about the Court or the Constitution or both. This is essentially a political job, in the sense that it must spring from and emphasize the will of the people.

These premises automatically cancel the objections to the President's proposal from the Right, from those who believe that the Supreme Court has been the embodiment of wisdom and has saved us from the perils of democratic institutions. They also cancel the objections of those who believe that there is not correct way of interpreting the Constitution except the way in which the Court has interpreted it, and who hold that the Court has acted in a wholly technical, impartial capacity rather than in a political one. (Let it be noted in passing that although these opinions are often expressed by the same persons, they contradict each other: the Court cannot at the same time be the instrument of wise policy and an automatic interpreter.) Objections from the Left grant that something must be done, but charge that this is not the right way to do it. It is an undignified subterfuge to "pack the Court." If a liberal can do it, a conservative could also. In view of the difficulty of predicting how Justices will decide, packing may be ineffectual in any case (*vide* McReynolds, reactionary, appointed by Wilson, and Stone, liberal, appointed by Coolidge). An age limit will not do the trick, since many conservatives are young and many liberals remain flexible in older years (*vide* Holmes and Brandeis). It would be better to limit the pow-

ers of the Court by legislation or constitutional amendment, or to extend the powers of government by amendment.

We believe these objections have not taken into consideration the full significance of the premises above set forth. There is no way to safeguard eternal progressivism in government, whether by President Roosevelt's method or by any other. If there is no guarantee of obtaining a progressive Court, there is surely no guarantee that new words in the law or the Constitution would be much differently interpreted than the old ones. The essence of the matter is not thematic or logical, but political. Some effective way or ways must be found of registering a national desire that the Court act differently at the present time. "Packing" the Court is as good a way to do this as any. It is not undignified to seek to add to it new members who will have different opinions about the Constitution and about policy from those of the present majority. There is just as much good logic in the dissents of Justices Brandeis, Stone and Cardozo as in the majority opinions. Able new Justices may be found who disagree in these matters with Justices Butler, McReynolds and Sutherland. Nor is there any betrayal of the existing constitutional system in acknowledging that the issue is and must be political in the deepest sense and that the tendency of an overwhelming majority of citizens has a right to representation in the Supreme Court as in the other branches of the government. To reject this measure in favor of a constitutional amendment is to reject a means of pressure immediately feasible for one that might take years to effectuate and might be blocked by one more than a fourth of the states, containing a small minority of the electorate.

It is true that new appointees by the President may be less good than is desirable, and that they may think in unpredictable ways. It is true that an age limit is not an assurance of liberality or flexibility. But these are not reasons for refraining from exercising possible political pressure on the Court through an indubitably constitutional measure that can surely be passed if it is supported by the progressives in Congress. Rather they are reasons for not stopping with this measure, but for attacking the Court conservatives on all fronts at once. There is no necessity for an exclusive choice between this proposal and others. There is no necessity for making the best an enemy of the good. The political strategy of the situation is to register by all possible means the people's desire for freedom to move in a progressive direction. Let us have also a resolution embodying a well considered constitutional amendment—or a set of them. Let us have also any well considered legislative action, other than this.

There is no question that the Court must be given a new lead, and that most of those who voted for Mr. Roosevelt desire that to happen. The sole danger is that those who are agreed about this will so fall out about the means that their pressure will be ineffective. That would be lamentable, in view of

the fact that the nature of the specific means is less important than the pressure itself. The very fact that a series of reactionary decisions led to a strongly supported proposal to pack the Court will of itself, no matter what happens as a result of this bill, exert a potent influence on the Court in the future. The learned Justices are bound to be a little more careful not to clothe their private prejudices in the Constitution, or to veto in the name of that broad document measures that the nation has decided it needs.

Is the Sit-Down Unfair?

MANY PERSONS who are as a rule friendly to the cause of organized labor are gravely troubled about the sit-down strike. Their feeling, as reflected in numerous letters received by The New Republic, is that it is clearly illegal and that it constitutes a sort of blackmail by which a small minority of the employees of an industrial corporation seek to dictate both to management and to their fellow workers, who may be entirely out of sympathy with the aims of those who are "sitting down." This attitude is probably well expressed by one correspondent of ours who remarked in effect: I am a farmer and I own an apple orchard. If I hired a man to pick apples and he sat down under the tree, I would be well within my rights, morally and legally, to throw him out.

The point missed by this correspondent, and by many other persons, is that simple analogies about an apple picker sitting under a tree have no meaning in relation to an affair like the General Motors strike. This corporation has some 235,000 employees, scattered through the United States. It is not owned by Messrs. Sloan and Knudsen but by some 329,000 stockholders, who are also scattered through the United States. Probably 99 percent of them have no first-hand knowledge of the labor policies of their company, and even if they had, and if they objected to the actions that are being taken, they have no real means of indicating their disapproval or altering the policy. As Berle and Means have pointed out, ownership and control are now distinct from one another; all that the average stockholder demands is that dividends should be regular and large. When you hire one man to pick apples in your orchard, you know how he and his family are getting along and you would probably be distressed if they were in a state of semi-starvation. But there is no contact at all between any of the 329,000 owners and any of the 235,000 workers except through the tiny group of Sloans and Knudsens, who probably own little if any stock and over whom the only real social control is the approval of their fellow big-business men in Wall Street or near to it.

Let it be remembered that this group as a whole has always been and is now 100-percent anti-union. Sloan and Knudsen, for example, are obviously not

in fact concerned about the collective-bargaining rights of those employees who are not members of the UAW. What they really want is no collective bargaining at all. If they can't have that, then they want fake company unions, or numerous employee groups that will be weak and ineffective just because none of them speaks for the whole mass of the workers. It is the standard history of strikes that the management always complains that the strike leaders are arrogant or radical or ambitious and that it weeps crocodile tears over the non-union workers who are deprived of the right to earn a living. Change the union leadership, change the personnel of the groups on strike, and the complaints from the bosses still go on.

The sit-down strike is not illegal. It is so new that no existing law has any relevance in regard to it. Statutes against trespass are clearly intended to prohibit the entry of thieves and other criminals who break in for the purpose of damaging property. But the sit-down strikers enter upon the property with the knowledge and consent of management. They have no desire to steal or damage any property, and whenever damage has occurred it has been incidental to brutal tactics of the police. The sit-down strikers are just as anxious to get back to work as anyone else is to have them do so. All they ask is decent treatment enforced through collective bargaining.

Vast quantities of nonsense have been printed lately about the immorality of a strike conducted by less than a majority of the employees. If the UAW, according to this argument, had 117,501 members, the strike would be perfectly proper. If it has only 117,499, then we must have nothing to do with it. To argue this way is to misunderstand the whole history of the labor movement. Unions do not win strikes by having an overwhelming majority of the workers in their ranks before trouble arises. They get such majorities by winning strikes. The fact remains that all previous attempts to unionize the automobile industry have failed; that the effort to operate with groups of small unions was tried in 1934 and proved a disastrous failure. If the automobile industry really wanted collective bargaining on the only basis on which it has any reality, it would accept the UAW and work with it. A ten-word announcement by Mr. Sloan that this was being done would bring 95 percent of the GM employees into the union in forty-eight hours. A majority of any group of employees will almost always favor a union strong enough to enforce their right to be heard. But instead, the General Motors Corporation has fought this union and any other effective one. It has spent vast sums on a spy system. It has violated the terms of the Wagner Labor Relations Act in the hope that the law would be declared unconstitutional. It has exerted every sort of bribery and coercion to keep men out of the union.

The sit-down strike is here to stay, and industry would be well advised to come to terms with it. Even if the present strikers are forced out by the

bayonet, on the day that operations are resumed, the possibility of another sit-down will appear. Dismiss every union man, and it will still exist; the conditions which force one group of employees to organize and fight in self-protection will eventually cause any other group to do the same thing. Modern industry, through technological advance, has itself created conditions under which its workers can no longer be treated as abject serfs. If the managers were really intelligent—which they are not—and if they were not controlled by patterns of thinking carried over from a dead past—which they are—they would make the decision their fellow industrialists in Great Britain made a quarter of a century ago. They would accept collective bargaining, would help the process instead of hindering it, and would agree to American standards of life for American workers.

Russian Politics in America

A SUBSTANTIAL number of liberals and progressives in the United States are rushing with apparent eagerness into a hot controversy with one another about the recent treason trials in Moscow. By lining up either on the side of Stalin or that of Trotsky, they are giving their convictions about Russian politics predominance over the need for unity in supporting immediately desirable measures in this country, measures that have no relation whatever to the guilt or innocence of the men recently condemned and sentenced in the Soviet Union. This division is unfortunate from every point of view.

We can understand why members of the Communist Party, subject to party discipline and loyal to the Third International, are compelled to take up the challenge of the followers of Trotsky. We can also understand why the adherents of that brilliant and persistent leader, with their hard-and-fast conceptions about the present Soviet rulers and world affairs, must defend their position and their partisans. But such obligations do not extend to the much larger groups which do not owe primary loyalty to either side. It is inevitable, of course, that everyone with an intelligent interest in world affairs should have paid attention to this remarkable and puzzling event and should have formed opinions about it, but it is not inevitable that they should let their emotions so run away with their common sense as to fight a sham battle about the trial on this side of the Atlantic.

Justice, to be sure, does not know national boundaries, and it is legitimate for anyone with a belief in civil liberties to exert whatever influence he may have against violation of those liberties anywhere. But we can see no evidence that civil liberties were so certainly violated in this case as to make a protest on this ground necessary. We are confronted on both sides with arguments that raise considerable doubt in American minds. A case that appeals to reasonable persons may be made out on either side. The simple fact is that we do not know enough to

be sure of our ground; we should therefore be content to let opinions differ and turn our attention to matters nearer home. The necessity for doing this is all the more urgent in view of the fact that either to attack or defend the Soviet government on the ground of civil liberties, in a sharp controversy of this sort which has so many ramifications, is inevitably to throw one's weight on one side or the other of a conflict about world revolutionary policy which liberals and progressives, at least in America, have hitherto deliberately avoided because neither represents the type of thought and action to which they are committed.

What do we actually know about the trials? We know that a number of Old Bolsheviks, who took a leading part in the October revolution, were accused of having plotted against the existing Soviet government, planning assassinations and making alliances with hostile governments in the hope that in a future war Stalin and his cohorts might be overthrown and they might take his place. We know that they were also accused of plotting at least a partial return to capitalism in the process of this overthrow. We know that they fully confessed their guilt on all counts, and were condemned in consequence. That is, in essence, all we really know.

About these known facts there has arisen an elaborate embroidery of speculation. Each speculation has its speculative answer. Everyone has a right to his own opinion. Fair-minded persons, it seems to us, ought to avoid drawing final conclusions unless or until more is known. We may illustrate the inconclusiveness of the argument now being carried on by balancing a number of these speculative assertions and replies:

1. Old Bolsheviks could not do such a thing as to plot assassination; it is contrary to the whole Communist theory.

But the Bolshevik opposition to assassination rests on a belief in mass movements, and this belief had been explicitly abandoned in the present instance by Trotsky and his followers.

2. Old Bolsheviks would not make an alliance with imperialist enemies of their country.

But Communists—and Trotskyites in particular—know no fatherland where the class struggle is concerned. If Trotsky believes, as he says he does, that Stalin has become the enemy of the world proletariat, he would no more stop at this than Lenin stopped at accepting the coöperation of the German General Staff in his return from exile, or at signing away vast stretches of territory at Brest-Litovsk.

3. Old Bolsheviks would never consent to a return toward capitalism.

But Trotsky's thesis has long been that socialism in one country is impossible without a world revolution, and that Soviet socialism is therefore false and doomed in any case. It would consequently involve no sacrifice of principle for him to return to capitalism in Russia, as part of his general strategy.

4. The confessions, incredible as they are, were forced by torture, or by promises of milder penalties, or by threats to hostages (members of families), or by hypnotism or drugs.

But there is not the slightest evidence for any of these guesses. The accused showed no sign of maltreatment; they must have known they had nothing to hope from mercy. Seasoned revolutionaries are trained not to betray causes for the sake of personal ties. The hypnotism and drug theories are fantastic.

5. It is not in accord with the principles of civil liberty to convict accused persons on the basis of confession unsupported by other evidence.

But the court stated there was documentary and other conclusive evidence, brought out in the preliminary hearings, but excluded from the public trial for reasons of policy (protection of secret agents, or avoidance of international complications?) This evidence was what forced the confessions.

6. The trial seemed like a rehearsed drama instead of a genuine legal contest over guilt or innocence.

But the Soviet system of justice, like the French and others, but unlike the Anglo-Saxon, places great stress on preliminary investigation and hearings, in which the facts are supposed to be established. The final and formal trial is always, in this sense, rehearsed, and confines itself to the more important matters.

It is the responsibility of believers in civil liberty to hold their minds open for any further evidence that may be presented. But it does not seem to us that it is their responsibility, on the basis of arguments such as these, to assert positively that the confessed traitors were not guilty and did not have a fair trial, or on the other hand to assert positively that they were guilty. Above all it is not their responsibility, on the basis of this incident, to join either side of the quarrel between the Soviet government and the Trotskyites. Believers in democracy may regret that opponents of the existing Soviet regime on matters of major policy, denied expression of a sort that is normal to us, are forced to such lengths, on the prosecution's own showing, in order to express opposition. But they should not be naïve enough to suppose that in a controversy of this kind Trotsky is any more a protagonist of liberal democracy than Stalin. Russian political institutions can be understood only on the basis of their historical origins. It remains for us, who have a larger degree of political freedom, to defend it by fighting for it at home.

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Health Insurance—the Next Step

ONE OF the gravest problems confronting wage-earners at all times is illness. For centuries workers sought protection against sickness and its concomitant wage losses through the medieval guilds, the trade unions and a variety of mutual-aid societies. In the modern era the risk of illness is met throughout the industrial world by social insurance. The contingency of sickness lends itself most easily to this technique. Its extent and duration are readily ascertained. Its costs can be calculated fairly accurately. It does not require large reserves. Its benefits become effective upon the mere budgeting and distributing of the present costs.

In the United States illness remains to this day the most neglected of all the major industrial risks, although two decades ago, when many state commissions were reporting on the subject and standard bills were being discussed in many state legislatures, it seemed that health insurance would follow on the heels of workmen's compensation laws. The issue is ignored even by the Social Security Act. Faced with the bitter opposition of organized vested interests—the medical and allied professions and the insurance companies—the aims of health insurance are today less known and less popular than they were twenty years ago.

Every passing year, however, makes the need for health insurance more urgent. Each new investigation reveals the crying need for remedial action. In normal times sickness constitutes the chief cause of dependency. From 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 persons are ill in the United States every day. With the highest proportion of doctors to population in the world, millions of Americans have to resort to public medical charity or go without care because they cannot meet the cost of illness. Illness strikes suddenly and unexpectedly. Its incidence is not uniformly distributed. While some people escape it or suffer only a short time, others are seriously ill for such a long time that heavy individual as well as social burdens are created. Illness is especially hard on the groups with the lowest incomes, who are most subject to it and can least afford its cost.

It is not possible in this short article to cite the many facts establishing the close relation of illness and poverty. The consensus of all studies is that the incidence and severity of illness are nearly twice as great among the lowest income receivers as for the better-paid groups. A recent study, for instance, showed that families with an annual income of less than \$250 per capita suffered 35 percent more disabling illnesses and 47 percent more sicknesses necessitating confinement in bed than those having yearly resources of \$425 and over per capita. Studies of the changes in health from 1930 to 1932 among unemployed families in New York's lower East Side

showed the number of ill almost doubled for adults and trebled among children.

Indeed, it has long been established that workers not only suffer higher morbidity but also pay with shorter lives. The higher infant mortality rate in the lower income strata was revealed by a survey of five cities made by the United States Children's Bureau in 1912-1914, which disclosed that the infant death rate was 49.2 per 1,000 live births in families where the father's annual earnings were \$1,250 and over, as against 179.3, or almost four times as much, in families whose annual earnings were under \$450. As stated by the late Dr. I. M. Rubinow, there are few generalizations so scientifically accurate as the proposition: "Poverty causes ill health; ill health causes poverty."

Caught between two millstones—loss of wages and unbearably heavy sickness costs—the sick American wage-earner first tries to get along with as little medical care as possible. When this can no longer be done his alternative is private or public charitable medical relief. A compilation of sickness surveys in twelve communities in the United States, made by Dr. Michael M. Davis, disclosed that from 25 to 30 percent of the relatively serious cases of sickness had no physician's care. In the rich city of Rochester, New York, 39 percent of the persons suffering from disabling illness had no doctor in attendance. The Committee on the Cost of Medical Care concluded: "Each year nearly one-half of the individuals in the lowest income group receive no professional medical care or dental attention of any kind, curative or preventive."

When medical care can no longer be postponed, self-respecting wage-earners are forced to resort to charity. The fact that large numbers in the poorer classes receive free medical care is too well known to require further backing here. What is significant is the fact that despite the inadequate care they receive and the enormous medical charity, workers still pay a larger proportion of their wages for medical services than persons in the upper income groups. The Committee on the Cost of Medical Care showed that while the group with the highest income pays only 3.7 percent of its income for medical care, the \$1,200-\$2,000 income group pays 4.3 percent, and the lowest income group 5.9 percent of its earnings for the same purpose. In other words, the very poor, presumably beneficiaries of unlimited free medical service, actually pay nearly 60 percent more for medical service in proportion to their incomes than the few who have the costliest specialists at their beck and call.

This situation is socially disastrous all around. It is as deleterious to the public health as to the doctors, dentists, hospitals, druggists and nurses. Medi-

cal practice today permits the existence of millions of remediable physical and mental defects and the occurrence of millions of cases of preventable diseases. The late Edgar Sydenstricker, a leading authority in the field, recently pointed out:

Although we are accustomed to boast of achievements in medicine and public health as having lowered mortality among infants, children and younger adults, the death rate among adults of middle and old age has not appreciably diminished in the past fifty years. . . . Even the mortality among mothers and infants in a large class of the population of the United States is still far above that in some other countries. . . . Four persons in every five obtain no dental care; less than seven percent of the population have even a partial physical examination, and less than five percent are immunized against some diseases. . . . Increased mortality rates, especially from tuberculosis and among infants, and more malnutrition among school children are already appearing in some areas and in some groups of the population.

A similar indictment was made a few months ago by the Surgeon General of the United States, Thomas Parran Jr., who shocked the nation with the extent and the devastating effects of venereal diseases in the United States, placing us among the worst countries in the world.

The medical practitioners suffer from these chaotic conditions because the burden of medical charity falls almost entirely upon them. By tradition and humanity physicians are forced to donate free service to individuals, hospitals and clinics. Their charity is not only disproportionate to their incomes, especially among those catering to the poorer sections of our cities, but makes these incomes still lower. Even in 1929 one-third of all private practitioners had net incomes below \$2,500. In 1933 a study of some 2,000 California physicians revealed that one-third earned less than \$2,000 net that year. One-half had net incomes below \$3,000 and three-fourths below \$5,000. One-third of the California dentists earned less than \$2,000 net, two-thirds less than \$3,000 and three-fourths less than \$4,000.

The doctor's dilemma is indeed perplexing today. In order to increase his income he strives to become a specialist. Competing for a livelihood he must maintain an office full of impressive and expensive apparatus which he may use only on the rarest occasions. Studies of physicians' overhead expenses place them at nearly 50 percent of gross earnings. The high overhead transferred to patients' fees means that more people go without adequate care while thousands of practitioners sit idly waiting for patients. It has been estimated that physicians are idle between one-third and one-half of their working time.

Indeed, no group rendering medical services is immune. The difficulties of private hospitals are well known. With one-third of their beds empty, they must constantly appeal to charity. The apothecary's art has disappeared. Fortunately for him, he

has been saved by the soda fountain and lunch counter. A pharmacist today compounds about 1,200 prescriptions per year on the average, although he could prepare ten times this number. Nurses face even greater difficulties. They have been particularly hard hit during the depression since, though the demand for their services declined, their numbers continued to increase because the hospitals needed cheap labor. A study in New York State in 1932 showed that the private-duty nurse earned a yearly gross income of \$478.80. Thousands of nurses have had to go on relief rolls.

The modern medical paradox of illness unattended amidst thousands of idle doctors, empty hospital beds and idle nurses, parallels our industrial paradox—starvation in the midst of plenty. Richly endowed with the highest quality of medical service, we are among the outstanding nations in physical plant and equipment, in the thoroughness of medical education and in medical research. Nearly 1,100,000 persons in the United States devote all or a large part of their time to medical service. We have nearly 7,000 hospitals, 132,000 pharmacists and an ample supply of nurses. Nor do we lack the means to pay for adequate medical care. The American people actually spend every year about \$3,500,000,000 for medical services, a sum sufficient to purchase reasonably adequate and proper care for all who need it.

The problem arises from the fact that despite great medical discoveries and new techniques, the practice of medical care in the United States remains as individualistic as it was centuries ago. Since, however, the bulk of our population today depends on wages for a living, few workers even in the best of times can save from their meager earnings for the many costly emergencies. When illness strikes a wage-earner, his wages—the very means of his livelihood—are cut off. Under these conditions it is not possible for him individually to provide for his family and also pay expensive medical bills. All authorities agree that by proper budgeting and distribution the present total expenditures on medical services would suffice to provide ample care for all. The practicable and feasible modern method of accomplishing this, without undue interference with present-day medical practices, is by health insurance.

Since our problem is chiefly that of the illness of the wage-earner, the health-insurance program must concern itself largely with the workers. Not only must the wage-earner be insured against the costs of medical care, but of even greater importance to him is the continuation of his wages when ill. The many years of experience abroad enable America today to work out the best and most practicable system of health insurance. The main principles of such a program are as follows:

1. Like other social-insurance programs, health insurance must be on a compulsory basis. Voluntary insurance has met with universal failure. The re-

cently growing number of voluntary insurance schemes in the United States will not meet the problem. European countries found that those most in need of this protection either cannot or will not insure and were forced to replace their voluntary schemes with obligatory systems.

2. Since all studies indicate that persons earning less than \$3,000 per year cannot budget for illness, these workers should be included in the scheme. Protection should also be extended to the existing unemployed through arrangements by the relief and insurance authorities. Those earning between \$3,000 and \$6,000 annually should be permitted to enter the system voluntarily.

3. The plan must provide for cash benefits as well as for medical care. To confine the system to medical benefits is to ignore the major economic problem and to hamper recovery from illness. Cash benefits should be paid the insured for about twenty-six weeks after an insurance period of three months and a waiting period of five days of illness. In the beginning the benefits might be limited to \$15 a week with additional allowances for dependents. The medical benefits should be extended not only to the insured but to his dependents. Without such provision, the worker's protection would not be complete, since the cost of health services for his family is almost as crushing. The medical benefits must begin immediately upon entrance into the insurance system and continue as long as necessary. They must include indispensable surgical and hospital services as well as essential dental care. If inability to work results, all benefits may cease after twenty-six weeks, when invalidity benefits should be provided either through the health or old-age insurance systems.

The law should also provide for maternity benefits. These should include cash benefits for a short period before and after childbirth, all necessary medical care and a small cash bonus to help defray the costs of childbirth.

4. While both medical and cash benefits must be linked in the same system, the determination of the right to cash benefits may be placed with full-time public officials rather than with the doctor who treats the insured person. The coöperation of the state, employers, insured and health professions may be obtained by giving them effective representation and control in the administration. Representative councils may be set up in each locality with power to make agreements for the remuneration of the health professions, according to the method preferred by the physicians themselves, which need not be the same everywhere.

5. Present estimates indicate that a fairly adequate system of health insurance would require about six percent of wages, which, on average weekly wages of \$25, would be \$1.50 per worker. Of this sum three-fourths is necessary for the medical care and the remainder for the cash benefits. The \$1.50 contribution may be divided as follows: Employers would pay 88 cents weekly for their employees re-

ceiving wages under \$20 a week, 63 cents weekly for those earning between \$20 and \$40 a week, and 38 cents weekly for those whose wages exceed \$40. Since a social measure should encourage the payment of higher wages, it is socially sound to arrange the employer's contribution in inverse proportion to the wages of the worker. The employee rates would be as follows: Those earning under \$20 weekly would pay only 25 cents a week; those receiving between \$20 and \$40 a week would pay 50 cents weekly; while those with incomes above \$40 a week would pay 75 cents weekly. The federal government would pay into the fund an amount equal to 38 cents for each insured worker.

The employers' contributions are not only just but will benefit them greatly. Excessive illness of lower-paid workers is due largely to insufficient wages. Industry, responsible for the maintenance of plant and machinery, must also be accountable for the worker's welfare which is even more vital to efficient production. Moreover, improvement in the worker's health means reduced labor turnover and greater efficiency. The employees' contributions are justified because they and their families are the chief beneficiaries of this insurance. They are now paying considerably more without receiving corresponding benefits. With the state already defraying much of the cost of sickness, government contributions to health insurance are not only natural but may represent a saving on present outlays for crime and indigency, and make for a more equitable distribution of costs.

The perennial objections of the American Medical Association to health insurance have long been at variance with the facts. Under compulsory insurance, they contend, free choice is denied to both patient and doctor, the personal relationship is destroyed and the initiative of medical practitioners endangered. These objections are silly and unfounded. Compulsory insurance everywhere permits the free choice of doctors by the patients, and vice versa. In fact, it allows a wider choice, since all qualified doctors are permitted to join the insurance system. The personal-relationship factor is exaggerated. No system of medical care could be more impersonal than the present clinics and charity wards to which the poor are driven. The fear that medical practitioners may lose their initiative under an adequate system of compensation is similarly absurd. Assurance of income, regular hours and better opportunity for post-graduate research will stimulate rather than weaken present initiative. Group practice and close association with colleagues are bound to foster the development of medical science. Health insurance in the United States, as in all other countries, would not only provide protection against the hazards of illness for the mass of wage and salary-earning population, but would also immeasurably benefit the medical profession by bringing to it a class of paying patients not in existence today.

ABRAHAM EPSTEIN.

The Emergency Brigade at Flint

ABOUT the time that the pressure of the crowd waiting to get into the injunction hearing was tearing off the hinges of the courtroom door, word came to union headquarters that there was fighting in the Chevrolet plant.

Anyone experienced in strike atmosphere could have told at the mass meeting on Sunday night that there was something in the air. The meeting, which was addressed by Father J. W. R. Maguire and Mrs. Cornelia Bryce Pinchot, was no ordinary mass meeting. It was an assembly of men and women who are on the march. It was almost impossible to get through the good-natured crowd. Every seat was taken. Workers were packed close against the wall. They thronged the stairway while Father Maguire was talking to the overflow.

One felt that this special meeting was the molten core of this historic automobile strike. Here was a strike whose outcome might influence the labor movement for many years. Its success or its failure did not concern automobiles alone. It took in its sweep steel, coal, rubber, electrical workers. The fate of the whole labor movement was bound up in it. It had emerged from the frame of unionism and had become a contest now between industrial leaders, like the duPonts, Morgans, Sloans, and a President and administration favorable to organized labor. Here in this hall was the burning center of this momentous strike. Failing immediate settlement, action of some sort was inevitable.

The action came. All that week the Chevrolet workers had been holding meetings about the discharge of workers for union activities. Now there was a sit-down in the Chevrolet plant. Plant Manager Lenz would not meet the union to iron out the trouble. First he agreed to do this, then he withdrew. This is one striker's story of what happened:

"A hundred of us started walking through the plant calling a sit-down. The company police and thugs sprang up from nowhere. They kept them shut up in the employment office and sprung them loose on us. In a moment there was fighting everywhere. Fighters were rolling on the floor. They had clubs and we were unarmed. They started shooting off tear gas. I saw one fellow hit on the head and when he swung backwards he cut his head on the machinery. He started to stagger out. Two of the thugs knocked him down again. I let go on a couple of thugs. You kind of go crazy when you see thugs beating up men you know."

There were about eighteen casualties in all. Two of them had to be taken to the hospital. Most of them came up to the room in the Pengally Building, where there is a nurse, a striker's wife, in attendance all the time. The room was soon full of bleeding men, the table heaped high with crimson gauze.

None of the casualties happened outside the plant. All the injuries occurred inside, showing who made the trouble. Union headquarters say they have definite proof that there are 500 thugs from a strike-breaking detective agency in St. Louis scattered in the plant. At the present moment the majority have barricaded themselves in Plant No. 8 of Chevrolet.

The Women's Emergency Brigade had come back from their first march past the plant. One of the women I knew was wiping her eyes, which were smarting with tear gas. Around her clung the acrid smell of gas. "They were fighting inside and outside the factory," she said. "The fighting would have been much worse if it hadn't been for us. We walked right along with our flag at our head. The gas floated right out toward us. But we have been gassed and we went right on."

Someone speaking admiringly of the Women's Brigade said, "Gee, those women can sure break windows fast!" But they didn't want to break them. "We had to break windows, I tell you, to get air to the boys who were being gassed inside. We don't want violence. We just want to protect our husbands and we are going to." These women were veterans of the battle for Fisher No. 2, known in Flint as "Bulls Run" because the police ran away. I have seen women do yeoman service in strikes. I have seen some pretty good women's auxiliaries in my time, but I have never before seen such splendid organization or such determination as there is in the women's auxiliary of Flint.

Who are these women? They are strikers' wives and mothers, normally homebodies. Ma and the girls in fact. They are most of them mature women, the majority married, ranging in age from young mothers to grandmothers. In the auxiliary room there are always some children playing around. A big crowd comes after school to find out what Ma's doing, more come in after movies and there's always a baby or two.

I should judge the majority of the Brigade have been to high school, and all are neatly and carefully dressed. There isn't a flaming-eyed Joan of Arc among them. One and all are normal, sensible women who are doing this because they have come to the mature conclusion it must be done if they and their children are to have a decent life. So they are behind their husbands as long as there is need, with the same matter-of-fact capability—and inevitability—with which they get the children off to school.

Today their job was "protecting their men." I went down to the Chevrolet plant with two of them. The workers had now captured Plant No. 4. The street was full of people; there were about twenty police between the bridge and the high plant gate. The police were quiet and unprovocative so the

crowd of picketers was good-natured. The sound truck was directing operations as usual.

The use of the sound truck is new to me in strike procedure and it is hard to know how a strike was ever conducted without it. As we came down past the policemen a great voice, calm and benignant, proclaimed that everything was in hand, the plant was under control. Next the great disembodied voice, really the voice of auburn-haired young Roy Reuther, urged the men in the plant to barricade themselves from tear gas. Every now and then the voice came, "Protection squad. Attention! Guard your sound car. Protection squad, attention!"

Then the Voice addressed the workers who crowded the windows of the lower levels. At the top of the steep flight of steps were other workers, lunch buckets under their arms, waving at the pickets in the street, and still more workers fringed the roof. The sound truck inquired if they were union men. They shouted, "Yes." The crowd cheered.

The measured, soothing voice of the sound truck boomed: "Word has come to us that there are men in the crowd anxious to join the union. Go to the last car, you will find the cards ready to sign. If you have no money for dues with you you can come to Pengally Hall later." The sound car strikes up "Solidarity," the men at the top of the steps, on top of the plant, in the street, all sing. A woman's voice next. She tells the crowd that the women have gone to the auxiliary hall to wipe their eyes clear of the tear gas and will soon be back. "We don't want any violence, we don't want any trouble. We are going to do everything we can to keep from trouble, but we are going to protect our husbands."

The Chevrolet plant covers eighty acres and has twelve departments. Plant No. 4 is the key plant, because it makes the motors. Without Plant No. 4 Chevrolet cannot make cars. This plant is set in a hollow, below a little hill about five hundred feet long. Down this hill presently came a procession, preceded by an American flag. The women's bright red caps showed dramatically in the dark crowd. They were singing, "Hold the Fort."

There was something moving to all the crowd to see the women return after having been gassed. A cheer went up; the crowd joined in the song. The line of bright-capped women spread themselves out in front of the high barbed-wire-protected gate. Some of the men who had jumped over the gate went back, amid the cheers of the crowd.

I went to the top of the little hill where a string of men were coming out of the back of the building.

"Are you going home?" I asked.

"Home? Hell, no! Half of us are sitting down inside, and half of us are coming out to picket from the street."

"How many of you are for the sit-down?"

"Ninety percent," a group of them chorused.

It is getting dark, the crowd has grown denser. A black fringe of pickets and spectators is silhouetted against the brilliant green lights of the plant windows. "Protection squad! Guard your sound

car!" the Voice warns solemnly. I go with members of the women's auxiliary to Flint No. 2 to get salamanders and material for a shack for the night picket line. The women are going to stay all night.

There is plenty of excitement in union headquarters a mile and a half away, a meeting is being held. You can hear the cheers as you push up the crowded stairway. Presently some of the Women's Emergency Brigade come in to warm up; the night is bitter. "The Guard has been called out," they report. "We met the soldiers going down as we came back." Why has the National Guard been brought out? I have been in scores of crowds where trouble hung on the edge of a knife. This crowd in front of Chevrolet No. 4 was not so terrifying as a Christmas crowd. After the first fighting was over there was not even the semblance of trouble.

I was at a union meeting at the Cadillac-Fleetwood Hall in Detroit, where a pale organizer started his speech with emotion, saying, "Your hard-sweated wages are being used to pay hired thugs and gunmen!" This was Organizer Mayo, who, with three other organizers, had been surrounded by a mob in a hotel in Bay City. They appealed for police protection, which must have been meager, since the organizers were kidnaped in Saginaw. Mayo escaped and made his way to Detroit. The other organizers were sideswiped by the thugs' car on the outskirts of Flint and are still in the hospital, one in a critical condition.

It is not only in Flint that one gets the impression of a vital movement. In all the union meetings I have attended there is this sense of direction of workers knowing what they are doing and where they are going. Here at this meeting in Detroit were reports from the picket captains; the welfare committee, which had been in Lansing and had succeeded in cutting red tape for strikers under relief; the "chiselers'" committee, which goes to various merchants to get donations of food; the recreation committee; and the strategy board, which is always in contact with the central strategy board of the union in Detroit. There is also a women's auxiliary which cooks the food, goes on picket duty, etc.

The vitality of this movement shows itself by the many spontaneous cultural movements that are springing up on all sides. Inside Fisher Body Nos. 1 and 2 the sitters are going to classes run by the union. Since last Monday the plants have been turned into workers' educational institutions. Classes conducted by Merlin D. Bishop include parliamentary procedure, public speaking and collective bargaining. The workers are writing their own plays. There are two groups of strikers who want to put on incidents of the strike in a living newspaper. Classes in journalism and workers' writing classes have been started with a graduate student from the University of Michigan journalism school as an instructor. This is a strike, Model 1937.

MARY HEATON VORSE.

Flint, Mich.

Private Life

ARE WE breaking out in spots of respectability? I thought it was going to be confined to the English, who catch it so easily, but I see from a belated copy of *The New York Daily News* that my old friend Joe Patterson has also got on the high horse, talking of Edward VIII. He is no longer news, Edward VIII, but respectability is. It is always incipient.

"It became a matter of historical necessity," said Historian Patterson, "to inquire into his woman habits."

That was not the English way of making opinion. It is true that in private they revealed the worst, but it was behind the Constitutional Difficulty they whispered about Edward, saying in a sad way that he was never on time, didn't sign documents, slept late, took drugs, that Mrs. Simpson was pro-Nazi and on strangely familiar terms with the German Embassy, made the King play Hitler's game by going to South Wales just as Hitler was planning to invade Czechoslovakia. In England the fierce light that beats upon a throne doesn't dwell on the wine-cellar exclusively, or even upstairs, but ends by showing us a neurotic who didn't sign documents. The tom-tom about divorce merely covered the inside information about efficiency. What they want, naturally, is a more efficient dumbbell, anchored in orthodox matrimony.

This whispering campaign was political, but too subtle for *The Daily News*. Joe Patterson went for the private life. What, he asked, were his woman habits? And then he answered, "He violated the homes of at least four of his subjects who up to that time had thought themselves his friends."

Here you have Respectability on terms of the old-fashioned melodrama. The snake lulls his unsuspecting friends into confidingness, leaves for the night and then creeps back by the verandah to violate the British subject's home. How can the outraged husband deal with this sinister porch-climber? Poor Mr. S. "could not punch the face of the King." He could not "go after him with a gun." Foiled this time, alack, but a time will come. "David Windsor and Mrs. Simpson," methinks, cannot forever "cheat Ernest Simpson out of this last full measure of his revenge," since their marriage must end in boredom and recrimination, in about five years.

That is Joe on the high horse, which recalls the Moody and Sankey idiom of Chicago Avenue. But his high horse shakes a funny leg now and then. When he was a promising young novelist thirty years ago he always did oscillate between the mills of the gods, run by an Old Testament Scotch-Irishman, and a gay breakdown on the threshing-floor when his Irish blood began to frolic. So, after his grim inquiry into Edward's "woman habits," he suddenly hee-haws about the "sap" who was a "heavy drinker" but couldn't get away with it like

such "tough babies" as Louis XIV and Henry VIII. It is quaint when the moral drum ceases to roll like this, and we are given a whirl of the bagpipes that ends with a pip and a squeak.

But when a tough baby begins to talk about the awfulness of a "heavy drinker" and the awfulness of a man who violates the homes of British subjects, he is giving us the cant of respectability. If it suited his ticket, we all know, he could remember that U. S. Grant sullied his lips with alcohol, and also Daniel Webster. Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Asquith were no mean performers, though one was a great lawyer and the other not a bad premier. Edward VIII could never have been so filthy a drunkard as James I, and even as a heavy drinker he might have staggered through his reign with great credit. It has been said that his father did. If you began to sand-bag all heavy drinkers in public life, you'd have to knock out some of the boldest and shrewdest mob-artists in American journalism. In the same way talk about adultery would have to be guarded. Where would our literature be if we were to eliminate our adulterers? The outlook would be pretty blue for *The Daily News* itself if some home were not violated every night for the delectation of its public, though all the better if the husband punches the porch-climber or goes after him with a gun.

Joe Patterson's paper says: "Why the sudden recent accession of loyalty to him, especially among radicals and liberals, we can't see."

It isn't loyalty to the particular man that stirs the radicals and liberals. It is their objection to hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is not only the tribute that vice pays to virtue. It is the tribute that vice levies on the vulnerable, and the vulnerable object to it. Chastity and sobriety are O.K., so long as they are associated with charity, but when men whose own reputations are just kept hanging together by safety pins begin to wail and thump their chests, the danger that their clouts may fall off is upsetting. The tough babies, especially, mustn't suddenly become tender. A tough should never soften except on the brain.

Worst of all, on the part of *The Daily News*, is to take out the step-ladder and mount the high horse in the name of "historical necessity."

It is perfectly true that a modern "private life" aims to lift the screen. It goes behind existing legend, whether it is the official legend that a public man is necessarily edifying in his private life, or the vulgar legend that they were all cock-eyed, though some were "tough babies" and others "saps."

But the art of debunking is never to set up standards of chastity and sobriety of the old type for a man who never traded on those standards. The oafish notion that you damn a public man by "getting the goods" on him comes from upholding that routine of moral conformity which the radicals and liberals know to be silly. Before Freud, if you like, a heavy drinker could only have survived, like Fox or Pitt, if surrounded by gentlemen in like case. But who, after Freud, believes in hounding the

drinker, the man a nation "loves" to tears, in the name of morality? And on the sort of evidence that recently drove a French minister to suicide. To all this the objection is serious, because Moody and Sankey psychology ought now to be too crude, even for *The Daily News*.

One glance at the life of Woodrow Wilson which his daughter Eleanor McAdoo has been publishing in *The Saturday Evening Post* reveals how much evidence must be taken in, in any event, to enable us to judge anyone "historically." The evidence of a natively sensitive and scrupulous person like Mrs. McAdoo is the evidence of a worshiper, of course, but it puts the tough babies out of countenance. And yet they wanted to bassoon that story, too, out of "historical necessity." FRANCIS HACKETT.

Coal Cracker's Song

Load an extra, load an extra,
Christ, you'd think we're made of steel,
You keep us idle for a week
And then you have the bloody cheek
To ask us for an extra, another buckin' extra,
Lay off your rusty squeal.

*One for the owner,
One for the toe,
One for the fire boss, the little so-and-so,
One for the big shot
Yellin' for the car
And one for a snifter at Pete Laputka's bar.*

Get your shovel, get your shovel,
Keep the driver on the run,
He goes to correspondence school
And drives an educated mule,
He has to pull an extra, another drippin' extra,
They need another ton.

*One for the trap gun,
One for the skeets,
And one for the playboy whose grandpa wore the
cleats,
One for the powder
And one for the shot
And one for the schooner that Pete Laputka's got.*

Watch your toppin', watch your toppin',
For the royalty is due,
The heirs are yellin' for the rents,
We've got to pay them fifty cents,
You'll have to top your extra, no shanties in your extra,
Or else we'll dock you two.

*One for the master,
One for the dame,
One for a bracelet, to keep the lady tame,
One for his butler
And one for his cook
And mark up our next on. in Pete Laputka's book.*

ROBERT ALLISON EVANS.

A NOTE ON "COAL CRACKER'S SONG"

Mr. Evans was born in St. Clair, Pa., in 1886. His town was in the anthracite region, its streets harsh and straight, always with the exhaust gases from the mines over them. It had a reputation and a main stem when the Molly Maguires and the Sons of Labor were abroad in the district. It has had many hard-fought strikes since. Mr. Evans' people came there to open some of the first mines, leaving the lands in Chester County they had settled under William Penn; along about 1900, his uncle drove the first American-made automobile through the muddy streets. Mr. Evans himself has had thirty years' experience with the mines, as certified miner, mine foreman, chief mining engineer of a large coal corporation, and mine executive. He says that the tradition of singing brought by the first English and Welsh miners still remains in the people there. He has supplied the brief glossary that follows.—THE EDITORS.

LOAD AN EXTRA. After coal is blasted out of the rock, the lumps and fine material are loaded into small three-ton cars and hauled to the mine shaft, or slope, by mules or motors. The miner works about a seven-hour day and is paid a contract price per car, according to conditions. However, the anthracite production has fallen from 90,000,000 tons to 45,000,000 tons per year in the last decade and consequently the mines do not operate on full time. When they do work, the miners are heckled to load extra cars and the "Coal Cracker's Song" tries to express their reaction to this heckling.

THE TOE. Years ago, boys went to work at the breaker or cleaning plant at the age of nine or ten. Before the day of mechanical preparation, the impurities were picked by hand from the coal as it ran down the long chutes in the breaker. The boys, as a rule, were cheerful young barbarians and needed close supervision, especially when their pitiful, thin finger ends developed "red tops." Sharp pieces of coal cut their fingers and the acid mine water made a pretty mess of the tissues, resulting in painful cauliflowers on the tips. The chute boss (so well remembered) was usually the outstanding grouch of the works and he invariably wore shoes protected with a copper cap across the toes. His method of speed-up was a well placed copper toe on the shirker's ragged overalls. "Giving 'em the toe," it was called, and, as a result, "the toe" became synonymous with "boss."

SHANTIES. When coal is loaded into a mine car, the bosses insist that the lumps be mixed with the fines in order that the voids may be filled. The shrewd miner will load the lumps together, creating great voids or shanties that save him the labor of blasting and loading more coal to fill these voids. This is a most successful trick where the coal is paid for on a car basis and not by weight.

ROYALTIES. The white man's burden. The boys in the know grabbed up all the anthracite-coal lands a century ago. Seven corporations control 96 percent of the thirteen billion tons in the ground today. Five generations of sons of the old coal barons have collected royalties or rents on each ton of coal mined from their grandpa's lands. The going royalty is about fifty cents per ton.

The Meaning of the Greenbelt Towns

ONE OF the most effective ways to criticize is to state the motives or objectives of whom-ever or whatever it is desired to condemn in such a way as to make them appear obviously ridiculous or fallacious. The Greenbelt towns have been widely condemned for their cost. Because houses in these towns will cost some \$9,000 or \$10,000 apiece, the towns are said to be a failure "as an experiment in low-cost housing." This is excellent use of the critical method mentioned above. They are called an experiment in low-cost housing by those who think it is easy to prove this failure by that test. If that were the objective, anyone would have to agree. But even using that method, the critics have gone a little too fast.

In the first place no one in his senses would attempt to demonstrate the achieving of low costs on any job which uses relief labor. Labor of this sort, used in such ways as to meet the need for employment, provide a minimum living standard and act as a reserve out of which other jobs are expected to draw men, will inevitably make the job cost about half as much again as it would under normal circumstances. Since we are committed to work relief rather than the dole, the lessons learned in this respect ought to be used in improving the cost situation very greatly over what it is now. No one can deny that costs, as things are, are high. But these are relief jobs, and only secondarily do they provide useful products.

Further than this, however, it is not generally taken into account that outside Washington, Milwaukee and Cincinnati small but complete cities are being built with schools, stores, water, sewer and electric systems, streets, parks, community forests and dairies and all the other appurtenances of a modern municipality. When one of the critics wants to find the average cost of a house in one of the cities to which the Greenbelt towns are satellite he does not add up the cost of firehouses, zoos, parks, utilities, streets and the city hall and add a proportionate part to each house. Yet that is what he wants to do with Greenbelt. The fact is that the houses there will cost between 40 and 45 percent of the total outlay. About 60 percent will be expenditures for revenue-producing services—either through direct payments (as for electricity and water) or taxes (as for streets and sewage disposal). By the test of the ordinary municipality, Greenbelt houses will not only be cheap in spite of the high cost of relief labor but far better and cheaper services will be provided than could be had in any unplanned city.

Both parts of this statement ought to be explained a little further. There will never be any really low-cost housing in this country until there is a housing industry—public or private. Nothing is now done as

it would be done in permanent large-scale operations. Bathrooms ought to be prefabricated, walls ought to come in sections, etc., etc. And only the old-fashioned materials are readily available. Greenbelt and its sister towns offer almost nothing novel in construction. Innovations would have required the building of a dozen factories for prefabrication and an outlook for permanency which no relief job has. There were being built 3,000 houses. If there were being built 300,000 per year for twenty years real wonders could be worked. But a limit of 3,000 means conformity to going processes. Nothing else is possible. Yet by good organization on the job, and by the elimination of speculative and other profits, costs have been reasonable compared with private work, and Greenbelt houses are sound. Their probable life is perhaps triple that of the ordinary suburban house; and the maintenance costs will be only a fraction of the costs of the usual jerry-built job.

There is as much nonsense about costs in housing as in most other things. First cost is the only one a journalist likes to notice. It makes things simpler. We probably asked for trouble in the Greenbelt towns by projecting our costs over sixty years, calculating maintenance as part of the charge. After sixty years we think these will appear to have been very low indeed; but sixty years is a long time to wait. There has been some misgiving about building sixty-year houses (which I shared at first), for we are probably at the beginning of great changes not only in home construction but in ways of living in general. But analysis of these likely changes, in so far as they can now be foreseen, seems to leave Greenbelt still a good place to live. Light, air and space are cared for; the community plan protects children's interests by its free courts and unimpeded foot-traffic ways to stores, schools and playgrounds; gardens are accessible; overcrowding is made impossible; common utilities are provided. The materials used may be outmoded; but insulation is good, windows work, heating is automatic, real artists have blended the architecture, the colors and the furniture. The size of units is flexible; trends toward outside eating and recreation have been thought of. Mobility is ensured by rental instead of sale. On the whole, Greenbelt seems more likely to gain than lose value as time passes. The sixty-year house is, therefore, justified on these grounds; and the rental charges are reduced by the lower maintenance and amortization charges that sound construction makes possible.

Nearly all these advantages are ones that the ordinary house in suburban areas does not have. They represent more services at less cost. By careful attention to topography also, sewage and

water, recreation and transportation, are fitted to a fixed plan. Greenbelt can grow to three thousand houses; when those are built, a new development will be needed. But that fixed plan makes exact fitting of services possible. Overcapacity in utilities is unnecessary, and the lowest cost is thus achieved.

We have always been afraid that Greenbelt would be expected to demonstrate some things to which it could not possibly have contributed much. To show where we wanted the emphasis placed we chose the name. Greenbelt refers to land, to the fixing of plan, to the functional uses of area, to the better living to be had by protection from crowding within and encroachment from without. The demonstration is a real one of this sort. It invites comparison not only with other suburban projects but with the whole theory of slum clearance. By taking a large area of cheap land and making the whole development, instead of taking high-priced land nearer the city where utilities were already available, the advantage of hooking-up to existing facilities was lost; but these facilities really cost less because of exact planning. They always have to be paid for somehow. We only ran the risk that our houses would be said to cost more than twice what they do. This has been said but not demonstrated; and we now have in being three complete little cities which might have been planned differently but which were nevertheless planned and are operable units for community living, not just rows of self-canceling houses.

The conception of suburban resettlement came less from the garden city of England than from some studies of our own population movements which showed steady growth in the periphery of cities. This contrasted with less growth or with actual losses both in rural areas and in metropolitan centers. In other words, it accepted a trend instead of trying to reverse it. These peripheral areas offer the best chance we have ever had in this country for affecting our living and working environment favorably. Slum clearance has to fight a good many entrenched interests; its land costs are too high ever to protect the rights of children or ever to provide recreation for adults. Cities will not develop such projects as these; they will probably oppose them. But Resettlement has shown how the federal government can do it. There ought to be three thousand such projects rather than three. They cost the government nothing in the long run, for their liquidation is certain. The only question is how low the rents may be. At Greenbelt we could easily set our rentals at several times what we expect to charge. If the government wants all its money back with interest, that can be done. It could always be done with such control and development of the land; and with a continuous and developing program of projects on a large scale, costs could be got down gradually until they made full-charge homes available to the lowest income groups. This would be better government policy than subsidized slum clearance.

REXFORD G. TUGWELL.

Word-Fetishism

TO INTERPOSE the screen of a text between oneself and experience:

Books of the Oxford Press, tapestried with hand-woven verse or crammed to the margin with satisfying prose, the good full value of the English, in volumes like well made boxes; German of Insel Verlag, so admirably blocked on white pages, the masses of agglutinated language emphatic with primer capitals, held suspended in an ether of white—German in black letter, like gratings of thick iron grillwork; Mencken's square-ended Americanisms, coupled with hyphens like freight-cars, that look so toothsome impaled on their pins. French of the "Grands Ecrivains Français," bitten on the page in black ink, distinct to the thinnest serif, as elegant and strong as a French balcony, the accents struck on as smartly as the tilt of a Paris hat—French that keeps dry on the greasiest paper, firm in the flimsiest binding, whose paragraphs lie so lightly on the page only waiting for one to pick them up; the garlands in ropes of Italian prose, slowly and elaborately wound, with the pronouns dangling down from the ends of the verbs, as ornate as a Renaissance ceiling. Latin verses, cut like inscriptions in copper, on stiff paper edged with gold; Latin prose, packed as solid as the bricks which it was said that Augustus left marble. Greek of the sixteenth century, all curlicues and crosses and dots, the commentary as deep as mud; Greek of the seventeenth century, still ligatured but running like a ribbon of lace, the commentary now interpenetrated with light; Greek and Latin on opposite pages of a Villoisin "Daphnis and Chloe," the Greek now in lovely little scrolls, the Latin vowels flying gay accents, both as charming as flowery meads; Greek of the modern English texts, restored to its original severity, gracious and spare and clear, and printed on India paper. Russian with its Greek of the barbarian reaches, with its blunderings and its Scythian hissings—Russian of the old spelling, word-ends weighted down with "hard signs," studded with strange bristling vowels like ornaments in Byzantine churches—Russian trying to move unencumbered, with its participles that buzz like bees, its *zhes* that vibrate like butterflies, its two-tined tsar-crested *tses*—Russian forbidding and tender, terse and quivering with life, poured out as fast as they can found the type into formless gray pages with no titles. Old nourishing fodder of American books, brought out on shiny paper from somebody's newspaper office or printed by the author himself, with the rectangles of plain pale type all wall-eyed on the facing pages. Newspapers supplying quick lunches from their trailing and flavorless columns; the fine dense grain that is binned in the columns of encyclopedias—

To put between oneself and experience the protection of a language, of words.

Ah, the pleasures of approaching a new language!

The words are all at drill in the grammar. They are odd or attractive objects, curiously colored or marked; they become for us familiar little beings, with faces and tails and deceptive disguises. We can play with them as if they were toys. Then, when first we begin to see into their meanings, with what freshness the world reappears to us! Trees and tables, dogs, women and children, coming and going, government and laughter, have assumed a new strangeness and fascination, as if they were being named for the first time. And still for a while the illusion persists: we seem to gaze through a blurring gauze on a stage excitingly lighted, at characters in picturesque costumes, who give voice to ideas and passions of an order different from ours.—But, as we watch, the gauze fades away: we find we are looking point-blank at men and women like the rest in plain daylight—they are putting the same food into their mouths, discharging briefly the same sexual desires, propelling themselves along the same roads over the same open earth under the same empty sky, for the same immediate ends, with the same aimless musings, as ourselves. They are saying the same things in their language that all the other people we have known have been saying in all of theirs.—And the work is where it was, the ground is no better cleared, the plans are no further advanced! We lose time with these screens and gauze veils! The languages, all language, is a source of confusion! We must blow it away, beat it down!

—I was ill; and they were swarming over my mind like ants. I watched them running to and fro; I wondered out of what dark burrows—of history and pre-history—they had come. I noted derivations, resemblances; and I tried to round them up in groups, to string them on the threads of principles. But like atoms of soot they rose in the air. Was our envelope of atmosphere not clouded with them?—were not all the words that had ever been uttered hanging up there like a fetid fog? Did we not breathe them and did they not asphyxiate us?—did people not fall down like drunkards loaded with too many words?—And now I had words like a disease—they were multiplying inside me like the bacteria—they were crawling in all directions, the words of all the languages mingling and barely for a moment forming a phrase or some irrelevant fragment of a sentence. They were taking possession of my mind when awake, of my dreams when I dropped asleep. They were making me focus upon them, isolating them singly like a microscope. And none of them had any meaning!

EDMUND WILSON.

The Union Club

The immortal Crassus prospers in a plump chair.
Silence. The Word of the just God is sustained
in Corona Corona.
A baroque nightingale beats its gold wings
in the cigar smoke.

ARTHUR EBEL STEIG.

Washington Notes

The President's Message Arouses Mixed Feelings
—*A Running Lateral Pass Good Strategy*
—*Three Attitudes on a New NRA*

MR. ROOSEVELT'S big-brotherly offer, last week, to provide apprentice-helpers for the elderly members of the federal judiciary, including the Supreme Court, was deeply disappointing to the more ardent New Dealers. These New Dealers had dug in their heels for a great constitutional tug-of-war—a glorious chapter, my friends, in the struggle for human liberty—and Mr. Roosevelt's suave and beguiling message left them fully armed and caparisoned, with no place to fight. Hence the great snort of disgust from Mr. Frank P. Walsh, and the undisguised irritation of Senator Norris. It is undeniable that many of the President's supporters regard his message as unworthy of the high objectives of the New Deal crusade.

Such criticism may be justified on moral grounds, but it is politically unrealistic. The aim of the New Deal is to remove the Supreme Court's prohibition on federal legislation regulating industry and agriculture. The straightforward way of doing this would be through a constitutional amendment, either an amendment enlarging the powers of Congress over interstate commerce, or else one that would go the whole way and prevent the Supreme Court from declaring any act of Congress unconstitutional. The reason why Mr. Roosevelt did not take this straightforward road is easily explained. It is highly doubtful if either of these suggested amendments would be ratified by three-fourths of the states within a reasonable period of time, if at all.

Mr. Roosevelt is responsible to the whole of the people for the day-by-day carrying on of the government, and he is probably justified in ducking quixotic fights where he can. If a constitutional amendment designed to validate federal legislation on hours, wages and collective bargaining were to be submitted to the states, what would happen? The legislatures of Maine and Vermont hardly would ratify it. What about the legislatures of the eleven Southern states, in many of which the textile-mill owners are politically dominant? Within the last fortnight, the North Carolina House of Representatives voted down the relatively innocuous child-labor amendment. What about Rocky Mountain states like Wyoming and Nevada, which are reputedly bossed by great mining corporations?

The Supreme Court became an acute issue only in the spring of 1935, after the Schechter decision and Mr. Roosevelt's "horse-and-buggy" interview. The reactionaries of the country were just beginning to mass their forces for the coming presidential election, and it was no more than ordinary prudence for Mr. Roosevelt to shy off from an open fight on the Supreme Court—one of the trickiest, most dangerous issues in American politics, and one that more than anything else defeated Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. It was not until after last November's victory that the problem could be seriously considered. It is reported that a careful survey was made of the temper of the legislatures in the New England, Southern and Rocky Mountain states, upon which it was at once evident that a constitutional

amendment was impracticable, and that means must be found to curb the Court through congressional action alone. The President's advisers first favored a law to prevent the Court from declaring measures unconstitutional except by the concurrence of seven Justices, a plan that would have given veto power to the triumvirate of Brandeis, Stone and Cardozo. Quarterback Roosevelt then hit upon the running lateral pass outlined in his message last week. It may not be the old-time, bone-crushing football that Mr. Walsh and Senator Norris were raised on, but it is an excellent way of crossing the goal line.

The proposed revival of the NRA has had much the same effect on the administration that the Ohio flood had, for example, on Paducah, Kentucky. In every direction, eminent administration advisers may be observed clinging to the tops of telegraph poles, each with his pet idea held high above the swirling waters, and each praying that Mr. Roosevelt will send the legislative rowboat to rescue him. The proposed NRA legislation raises the whole question of the relation of government and industry. Directly, or indirectly, it will condition everything that the administration is likely to do during the next four years. For many administration members, the present suspense is nerve-racking.

Although each administration adviser has his own strongly held opinion about the desirability of a new NRA, there are, in general, three main attitudes. One group finds its spokesmen in Assistant Secretary of Commerce Draper and Mr. Donald R. Richberg. What Messrs. Draper and Richberg are advocating is essentially a revival of the NRA of General Johnson and the Blue Eagle. They would have the codes sun-kissed and cellophane-wrapped, and they would give certain powers to the Federal Trade Commission, but the 1933 principle of "self-government in industry" would be largely retained.

The aim of a second group, which includes most of the White House's heavy-duty thinkers, is chiefly at all costs to prevent the program of Messrs. Draper and Richberg from being enacted into law. The members of this second group argue that self-government in industry is a demonstrated fraud. They say that, far from giving additional powers to industry, a large part of the power it already has ought to be taken away from it. They fear that the Draper-Richberg NRA may be used to ward off anti-trust prosecutions either begun, or contemplated, by the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice, once the weakest arm of the administration, has been greatly strengthened during recent months. Officials believe they will be able to uncover viciously anti-social practices of big corporations.

A third group is influenced primarily by the relief problem, and takes an opportunist view. Its members acknowledge the dangers of the Draper-Richberg proposals, and agree that the administration must give proof of its power to dominate industry before the next four years are up. But, they say, the administration's immediate duty is to make jobs for the workless. They consequently advocate the immediate enactment by Congress of broad, simple legislation fixing minimum wages and maximum hours, after the manner of the Blue Eagle blanket of July, 1933. It is reported that Mr. Roosevelt favors this third point of view, and that legislation covering hours and wages may be sent to Congress within the next few days.

As was suggested above, the problem has as many facets as a housefly's eye. It is a problem that no one is entitled to be dogmatic about. Whatever legislation is passed, moreover, the way it is administered will be much more important than its legal phraseology. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the group that wants to investigate industry, and prosecute abuses wherever they are uncovered, is taking by far the soundest line. Any wages-and-hours legislation that Congress may pass at the present session is almost certain to be extremely feeble. The A.F. of L. and the labor bloc in Congress stand committed to the Black-Connery thirty-hour-week bill, which it is understood Mr. Roosevelt will oppose to the utmost. What is likely to happen, therefore, is a bitter, useless fight between the congressional labor bloc and the Democratic leadership over the thirty-hour week.

Far more important, however, is the question of how much power the administration today has to enforce its will on industry. Exactly what can the administration do toward compelling the employers of the South to adopt a living wage? Suppose an adequate minimum wage were set for the Southern textile mills, and suppose the mill-owners thereupon threatened wholesale dismissal of their workers. Or suppose they threatened a drastic increase of prices. What powers has the administration—powers that it didn't have in 1933—to combat either of these threats?

Washington.

T. R. B.

Other People's Money

*Baiting the Financial Hamburger Merchants
—Mild Judgments on Fixed Trusts—
Burned-Out Brain Bearings*

I AM SURE I have said many things in this department that have pained many people. But one thing, at least, I have not done; I have not talked about myself. I cannot resist the temptation to add that offense now to all my others.

Some weeks ago a gentleman wrote to The New Republic saying, among other things, that I made him mad. There are men whose columns and writings make me mad, so I know just how he feels about it. In any case, back in 1929, when the trick of angering a reader with aspersions on our noble system was just about the simplest thing in the world, I incurred the wrath of a good many people by some observations in The New Republic on the subject of investment trusts. They did not hesitate to put their disapproval into letters. And later, when the management trusts fell into disrepute and the fixed trust began to grow in popularity and once again I warned about this incredibly stupid investment device, I got more than one angry protest from the gentlemen who were merchandising this new form of financial hamburger.

As one looks back on that weird chapter, one wonders again at the almost unbelievable folly of men who like to think themselves entitled to the treasures of the earth because of their smartness. In proof of all of which, as well as a sort of pitiful appeal not to wax wroth at me too gayly, I offer the following brief facts and excerpts.

I wrote in The New Republic that in the fixed trusts, the trustee has no discretion over the securities owned. He

must, however, sell any security in the trust as soon as the corporation that issued it passes a dividend. "The sole test for selling a stock," the maddening article continued, "is the passing of a dividend. When this happens it must be sold. Now it would seem quite obvious that this is just precisely about the most inopportune moment to sell a stock. If a stock must be held until it has passed a dividend the holder will find himself in possession of it when the market has been reduced to its lowest level. Yet the depository bank has no choice but to sell it, a proceeding which is certain to inflict a loss on the trust."

That seemed sound sense to me then, but it produced no end of irritation in the minds of various persons. One of the fixed-trust groups that was especially peeved at me later was the Distributors' Group, Inc., a large purveyor of fixed-trust shares. I had to submit to a good deal of patronizing lecturing from one of their agents. That was around 1932 or 1933. I now quote from *The New York Times* of January 28, 1937. This was an account of a report by the SEC (please keep in mind that North American Trust Shares of 1953 were sold by the Distributors' Group, Inc.).

"These 1953 trust shares [North American] were supported by twenty-eight underlying securities and the shares carried a provision that in the event one of these securities passed a dividend that security had to be sold within 100 days and the money returned to the investor. As a result of this provision, compelling the elimination of securities which subsequently increased substantially in value, these 1953 North American Trust Shares produced for investors a loss in excess of \$88,000,000, according to accountants of the SEC."

I wonder how many of the many thousands of small investors who bought these shares were maddened by my fault-finding when I wrote about them? And remember, this was a loss in a single fixed trust.

Writing about fixed trusts in *The New Republic* seven years ago, I ventured this summary at the end of a rather extensive analysis of the fixed trust as a form of investment: "It looks like a very awkward form of investment device and, I think, time is going to register this judgment against it." That was surely a mild and decorous statement.

To which I got a letter from a maddened reader saying: "Do you not realize that by thus tossing off this ill digested judgment on fixed trusts you interfere with the legitimate activities of investment houses whose long record of honesty is not open to question; who have spent many thousands of dollars in research and preliminary surveys before offering shares?"

And another fixed-trust peddler, red-faced with anger, said to me: "A man like you can just sit down at his typewriter and bang out a piece without thinking and ruin another man's business." The inference, of course, was as plain as a pikestaff that he and his colleagues had thought profoundly about the matter and I had not thought at all.

It is interesting to see how close I came to the mark without thinking, while those who burned out the bearings of their brains pondering the matter went so far wrong. Behold, for instance, an opinion, rendered a few days before I write this, by a Mr. Cedric H. Smith, member of Smith, Burris and Company. Mr. Smith, in alliance with Mr. Ross Beason in Chicago, distributed ten separate fixed-

trust units. He told the SEC: "There is no excuse for a fixed trust. It is an unsatisfactory medium of investment. Conceding honesty in management and proper trusteeship, there is still no excuse for a fixed trust."

The difference between Mr. Smith and myself, however, is that he came to this view in 1937, apparently, while I arrived at the same place in 1927, when Mr. Smith and associates were selling fixed-trust shares on which the public lost, according to the SEC, \$65,000,000.

I know I made some people mad when I wrote about these things some years ago. But I wonder if they were as mad as those who lost that \$65,000,000.

JOHN J. FLYNN.

Noctis Equi

The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, by Christopher Marlowe. Maxine Elliott's Theatre, January 8, 1936.

HOW GREATLY it is all planned," Goethe said of Marlowe's play (though, of course, the great Goethe said like things about certain fairly flat Roman versions of Greek sculpture that, all afresh, he saw in Italy); but this tragical history of Doctor Faustus is, as a matter of fact, none too evenly disposed in its planned development. Only a variety of emotional pressures on the leading actor's part can register for the audience the stages of Faustus' struggle and his progression toward that climax of damnation. And yet Goethe was right, for this drama, in its length and stretch, is planned with greatness. The ground plan of its conception is dazzling, though doubtless beyond performance quite for any dramatist anywhere and ever. One way of describing a certain aspect of this piece is to say that it is one of those special instances in art which lead you to blame yourself rather than the artist for whatever shortcomings may appear in it, such is the radiance of this drama's ambition and the spell of its audacity.

To me at least this occasion of Marlowe's play with the Federal Theatre was completely absorbing; and I was forced again to wonder, as we have all done before now, what other course, or, rather, separate parallel line, our English drama might have taken if Marlowe had lived. There was a brain less shining and flexible than Shakespeare's, with less, too, of good plain sense plus flying after summer merrily, less of the easy universal, less penetrating inwardly; and yet masculine, agnostic and passionate, learned and bold, indeed reckless, compulsive, crammed. This brain had its own order, as a drama like "Edward II," coming later, plainly showed. Its sincerity was now naughty, now imperious; and its music was of a violence and splendor that persuade us less than they enforce themselves. Where Shakespeare is complex, Marlowe is intense; it is astonishing, sitting there at "Doctor Faustus" to see how he can hold his own. This verse, sometimes so tortured with its Renaissance image or cerebral pride, sometimes so wide in pomp or daring in aspiration, comes straight out over the footlights—to, I may add, an audience whose attention is such as I have not seen in the theatre this year.

Mr. Orson Welles not only acts Faustus, but directs the play. Mr. Paul Bowles has written music that can often float you into the scenes' Elysium, as it were—notably those where Helen's apparition comes. And Feder—a name that,

not to speak it profanely, seems one of the attendant spirits or demons of the piece—has done the lighting. On an apron stage, well used and frankly admitted, he has created a body, a dramatic medium, of light, by which the divers scenes are given, the entrances and exits effected and the dramatic moods established. What was sheer sprinkled-in fireworks on Marlowe's stage spreads now from firecrackers to complete revealments or images. The settings appear, through the means of light, to be some chiaroscuro of the cosmic. They seem some concentration in space. It is as if we dealt here with that *Topos-nous* of the Gnostics, "space-mind," the agent between Creator and creation.

One way to say all this is to say that in his own epoch Marlowe's play, though this sort of production in light would have been close to its innermost quality and knowledge, could never, by the sheer lack of science, have been produced thus, exactly as the Greeks knew that the blood was carried to the lungs but, not having the chemistry by which oxygen would be apparent, did not know why the blood was sent there. On the other hand, of course, the fires of declamation, that orchestra of recitation and sound poured forth, the wide and mounting scope, of Elizabethan acting that in Marlowe's day went to the creation of this drama we have not any more. It is plain that Marlowe in this piece did not rely on physical horrors in order to arrive at his effects; as Drayton said, "his raptures were all fire and air"; he relies on poetry alone to bring before our eyes the dramatic vision of a scene. Very likely, then, light rather than material scenery is a happy resolution of his stage needs. And still above that, there is that chief expressive medium of the poetry spoken. And that poetry, mostly given to Faustus, is spoken far above the average by Mr. Orson Welles.

The approach made to this Marlowe production seems to me one of great tact and imagination, highly to be praised. It is only a further compliment to say that, though the play is not heavily cut, it seems ruthlessly short—*O lente, lente, currite, noctis equi*, you in your turn think, making yet another use of the verse where Ovid in Corinna's arms asks the horses of the night to go slow, go slow—by what ironic dominance did Marlowe make this express a damned soul pleading for more time!

The acting in general is adequate, especially with regard to hearing the lines. Mr. Jack Carter as Mephistophilis brings something to the part that the ordinary actor of the rant school might miss; he needs only to feel like troubling himself to study the vivid meanings written there. Mr. Harry McKee was the best clown I have ever seen in Elizabethan revivals, the brain really seemed to chase about with the lice he talked of. From Mr. Welles's conception of Faustus I differ largely in but one respect: I see no reason why Faustus should be mussed or grimy; on the contrary he should be in general very *soigné* and distinguished, so that we may realize how many of the things he asks for are not those of medieval squalor but of choiceness, rarity, depth and fascination, cosmic and chimerical as well as sensuous, and born of that Renaissance haunted with so many kinds of beauty. Mr. Welles may also with time become more meticulous as to the verse stresses or patterns here and there, though he has already to his credit some veritable triumphs in reading, not least in those involved passages that hang in the air by almost less than a thread. He pos-

sesses also both naturally and by study a notable gift of projection, no mean asset for Marlowe's lines.

Not only in the reading is Mr. Welles good; he is even better at certain spots in his design for the stage movement. The best of these, fortunately, concerns the most marvelous and admired motif in the plays: those that touch Greece and Helen. On the steps to the apron's left Mr. Welles's Faustus sits when he speaks the lines of pleasure conquering his despair:

Have I not made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Oenon's death?
And hath not he that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music—

Some scenes later, when Helen comes, just before the play's end, he has Faustus sitting to the apron's right, in an exact balance to that former position. At the back of the stage is Helen, not stupidly classic but looking like Diane de Poitiers on a tapestry in a silver moonlight, the long open bodice, the high breasts, the coif, the stiff folds. Presently Faustus will go to her and she will give him her hand, for we are not to think his enjoyment of her is ghostly or unreal. But for the moment Mr. Welles by a very brilliant invention has Faustus there at the front right, looking out away from Helen, to recite those incredible lines:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.

STARK YOUNG.

The Truth in Fiction

BLACK LEGION takes a stand against the hooded terrorism and senseless boogie-boogie of the organization it deals with. It just about stops with the specific, of course, not going into the many uses of such instruments, into their origin, backing, place in history. But I must be excused from the game of basing a whole review on what isn't there, because of a certain queer idea I have, namely, that even half a loaf on the national stomach is at least nourishment taken in, and as such worth fifty pood of pie in some ideological sky.

The conflict here starts with rivalries for promotion in a machine shop, and mounts as Humphrey Bogart's anger and disappointment are played on by the boys: he learns that he is an American (a studious Pole got "his" job), that there are others, that something ought to be done, etc. So he joins the boys—a chap from the shop, a druggist, many other types. There is the business of initiation hocus-pocus, a night raid to chase the Pole out of town, more raids, the growing neighborhood suspicion and Bogart's attempt to get clear of the whole business, the raid on his good friend Ed who had learned too much through trying to help him, his apprehension for the murder of Ed—and finally the trial, where threats against his wife and child make him cover up for the Legion until he sees that the defense is such as to kill his wife with shame anyway, and breaks through to denounce the Legion men (rather too conveniently in the courtroom). The story ends on a harangue in favor of democracy by the judge and sentence of

life for all concerned, with the picture fading on the wife as she watches her husband file out for his long lesson with the boys.

On the screen we see a typical group of people, their background and responses; outside of one short sequence (a Legion head is revealed as boosting the idea for what he can make out of selling the members hoods and guns) the general pattern of violence and injustice shows only by implication. Any awakened mind can see that the wisdom teeth have been pulled, so where is the bite? You might settle part of the question just by listening to the remarks of wonderment and new conviction in a typical audience: "Was this all supposed to happen somewhere?"—"So *that's* what this Black Legion stuff is all about"; but it is a question of more things than agitational orthodoxy. For one thing it suggests the business of possibilities and limitations in popular fiction. What can you put in a story and still have a story?

In the Soviet Union the finding was recently brought in that a film story, like a tree, should grow and be visible to folks, not just be banged up out of dialectical lumber. And indeed in this country it has long been a known fact that movies don't go over with the popular audience unless they are built to move and enlist people's belief by means of characters sustained through their make-believe problems, conflicts, joys, whatnot. So much of a film's production is taken up with building these qualities tightly in, that when you have to turn about and spend most of the time sketching a wide historic or economic background—well, trouble: and generally nothing much in the total but bits of obscure action, intercut with parades and mass hoopla, intercut with printed titles, intercut with short strips of mugging to register half a hundred cases of fear, lust, agony, virtue, etc. Even a good actor is in a bad way here; even the most delightful, likely types are splendid only in patches, never having been made organs of the story to begin with. Sad it is and a loss to the race that the lads who know by the yard just how to hop over these obstacles continue to prove it irrefutably on paper and it is almost certain their secret will die with, or possibly on, them. For it is a pretty sure thing that those who actually sweat to make films haven't worked it out yet and, on the subject of whether they think they will, keep their mouths buttoned.

Now "Black Legion" is both this and that. Being a Hollywood film, it is a story; being an exposé piece, it has a tough problem of coverage. In the ordinary picture sense it is well made without having the genius in the form that "Fury" showed. The casting is good; the use made of its possibilities by director and actors is thorough (from Humphrey Bogart to the chap who did the small bit of being recruited in the shop washroom). Each incident as it comes up is gone through skillfully, with a dexterous economy of relation and point. It has excitement, reality; and its seeds of truth are assured of being sown nationally.

But from the angle of mass appeal (i. e., box office; i. e., the final index of educational value) it shows strains and weaknesses. It has a general dramatic indecisiveness, ending not only in gloom but without much clear satisfaction either way. And this is probably traceable to the more general fact that it is fiction under difficulties, so conscientious in coverage that it moves by jerks. Flashes of life in the shop; domestic flashes in the neighborhood; back to the shop; back to

the houses; then to the drugstore, the Legion meeting, the first raid, the shop, a street corner, and so on. Each one of these is essential, mind; each a lesson in speed and focus. But there are too many of them crowding too fast; no one of them can stay long enough on the screen to become an accepted part of our dramatic experience—and the same is partly true of the people involved. To have grafted together all the people and properties and random branches cut from the tree of current history, so that the didactic edges would have disappeared in a finally growing whole, would actually have taken four times the present footage. Which would absolutely bore the pants off anything but a Eugene O'Neill audience in the pink of training.

It is a pity to make general points at the expense of an honest job of film work and one of the most direct social pieces released from Hollywood. But the picture is a very good illustration of what is possible and what is too much for the time limit and need for explicitness of all films. It is an encouraging sign, but also a warning signal: to stop demanding a ten-reel feature on the Rise of Western Imperialism and look around to see what *can* be done with pictures.

OTIS FERGUSON.

The Bandwagon

There is something very homely and informal in the fact that the Lady Elizabeth should suddenly become Queen and Empress in the middle of an attack of 'flu.—*The (English) Bulletin*.

Politically the magazine might be called pro-Fascist in a rather sane and liberal sense.—*Analysis of The American Mercury in the June, 1936, issue of The Writer's Digest*.

The King may abdicate but with the love for Dixon's jams and pickles the family stood together like the Empire.—*Advertisement in The Bradford, England, Telegraph and Argus*.

SURREALIST RELIEF

The Red Cross depot here received two tuxedos, a dress suit and two framed lithographs, for flood refugees. "They just can't get the right slant," said Maurice J. Splaine, director.—*Associated Press dispatch from Worcester, Mass., in The Hartford, Conn., Courant*.

WHO TAKES CARE OF THE JAIL HOUSE WHEN THE JAILER IS IN JAIL?

In Russia one-third of the population is in jail, another third has just been released from jail, and the other third is just about to go to jail. That is the truth about Russia.—*Archbishop Michael J. Curley, quoted in The Washington Post*.

ANTIDOTES TO COMMUNISM: I

John J. Murphy, vice-president of the South Boston Citizens' Association, urged March 17 be made a legal holiday. He declared patriotic holidays were an antidote to communism.—*News item in The Boston Herald*.

PAGE NOAH!

The setback levee floodway . . . is working well and handling 250,000,000,000,000 cubic feet of water per sec-

ond.—Statement by Colonel P. S. Reinecke, reported in *The St. Louis Globe Democrat*, regarding the New Madrid spillway. Our correspondent who sends it in remarks that at this rate, one minute's flow would cover the state of Missouri to a depth of one and a half miles.

THE GOOD SHIP ROCK AND RYE

In Alaska, irate residents claimed a relief ship chartered by the Alaska railroad to bring emergency supplies brought twenty-five tombstones to Ketchikan and 1,000 cases of liquor to Juneau but no meat, butter or fresh vegetables.—News item in *The Everett, Wash., Daily Herald*.

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and \$1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

Our College Writing Contest

A SMALL snowstorm of letters resulted from the announcement, in our issue of November 18, of a \$25-prize for the best 300-word letter, by a college undergraduate, declining the Republican presidential nomination in 1940. Students in all parts of the country leaped at the chance to refuse to be the standard bearer in a contest in which, judging from their replies, most of them felt that the Republicans had no chance of winning. After much mental anguish, the judges awarded one prize and five honorable mentions, as follows:

The prize goes to Damaris Haas, Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio.

The honorable mentions are as follows:

Harvey Dawson, Harvard University.

William Sheldon Wallace, University of California.

Janet Kapelsohn, Hunter College, New York City.

John Martin, DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana.

John R. Watt, University of Washington.

Damaris Haas declined the nomination chiefly on grounds of the horrors of candidacy: "I decline to be the man to run against Roosevelt, Farley and Charlie Michelson. I decline to be the ventriloquist's dummy draped in the American flag who is presented to the Republican presidential convention while the delegates whoop it up over the coffin of the Party with an obscene farce of enthusiasm. . . .

"I decline to go sleepless, forever impair my digestion and sweep across every state in the Republic on a campaign tour. I decline to kiss hundreds of slobbering brats, shake hands with thousands of the sweaty populace and promise swarms of rapacious politicians everything from a postmaster's job in Keokuk, Iowa, to the Embassy at the Court of St. James."

Mr. Dawson also felt that accepting the nomination might do him harm, and declined for several reasons:

"First: I am afraid that the tremendous praise which the powerful Hearst papers would undoubtedly give me might go to my head.

"Second: I never was very good at arithmetic; and I know that I shall be unable to make high protective tariffs compatible with larger export markets and protection of consumers' interests. . . .

"There is one further reason why I must decline your offer, and allow someone else to fill the shoes of Governor—what was his name?—from Kansas. It is the same reason for which I would decline an offer to fight in Madison Square Garden against Joe Louis—or even John L. Lewis, for that matter. I don't like one-sided victories."

Mr. Wallace viewed the situation with a practical eye: "Gentlemen, I have my future to consider. I am not ready for the scrapheap. It is too much to ask a man of my vigor to spent his remaining years in seclusion.

"And I have my family's future to consider. Of the two candidates in the last election, which one's son married a du Pont? The husband of which one's daughter became a Hearst publisher? And which one's brilliant adviser became a molasses mogul? . . . I,

too, have a growing son and daughter and may some day have a brilliant adviser. Therefore, gentlemen, in the coming campaign, I shall ally myself with the forces that attack the economic royalists."

Miss Kapelsohn resists the temptation to accept even though she "may be without employment for years to come, and would gladly accept any work for which my four years at college have fitted me. But how could I cope with the arduous duties of office boy to the United States Chamber of Commerce?"

Mr. Martin tells the Committee: "Not only must I decline the Republican nomination, but I must also go out and cast my vote for the labor-party candidate, who is the only man in the field. I believe your attempt to toss another hat into the ring is ill timed. The hat has bounced right back out again. It was a top hat."

Mr. Watt lists a number of points on which he disagrees with Republican doctrine, and goes on: "Must I elaborate, gentlemen? As you can see for yourselves, you got the wrong man. You must have been thinking of some other fellow. Are you sure you didn't get me mixed up with Mussolini?"

A somewhat pathetic plea to the Republican National Committee is made by E. J. Kahn Jr. of Harvard University. "I have a favor to ask," says Mr. Kahn. "If we are to correspond further, will you please address me on plain white business envelopes? The mail in this office goes through the hands of three secretaries, and I am sensitive to kidding."

A number of writers emphasized their fear that the Republican Party is headed toward fascism. Typical of these is the letter of Corbet Hanchett, of the University of California, who says: "A Republican President in 1940, to have been elected by the supporters of that party, must be flexible to the demands of capitalism. He would be, willingly or not, leading the country to fascism. God forbid that I be the leader of a return to the archaic principles of the Dark Ages."

Although a majority of the contestants wrote from a point of view unsympathetic to the Republican cause, this was not true of all. Several suggested that they wouldn't at all mind serving as Republican Chief Executive, but felt that the Democrats now have the country sewed up, for an indefinite time to come. A good deal of personal animosity toward Mr. John D. M. Hamilton was displayed, many of the letters being addressed to him, with words supplied from his two initials of which, we are sure, he would not approve.

The dominant note throughout all the letters was that the Republican Party has not kept abreast of the times, that it is the spokesman for special privilege and that its proposed remedies for our national problems are inadequate.

CORRESPONDENCE

Some Facts about the GM Strike

SIR: May I present a few facts about the General Motors strike, particularly Mr. Sloan's assertions that the majority of the men are satisfied with their working conditions and their present form of bargaining?

The "company union" (instituted under the NIRA) has never done anything significant toward bettering working conditions. The management has always been very solicitous about such matters as drinking fountains, broken windows, parking space, etc., but a demand for higher wages or an alternation of shifts has always been met with a stall: "The management cannot see its way clear to granting this request at the present time."

A good part of Mr. Sloan's estimated majorities are men who have grown to feel that they are entirely dependent on the largesse of the company, and consequently accept as truth any propaganda published by the company. This sense of dependency is deliberately fostered by the company through its payroll loan system, used to alleviate distress during lay-off periods, by loaning small weekly amounts to needy employees.

The flood of mass protests and petitions against the strike were a combination of subtle intimidation and abnormal loyalty to the company. Some sympathizers signed to protect their jobs; others were exposed by their refusal to sign, thus opening them to discrimination and possible violence from the fascist-minded loyalists.

The management gave its consent to forcible ejection of union men, five of whom were thus manhandled and ejected from the Pontiac plant at Pontiac, Michigan.

The petitions were crudely designed, written in pencil, and were supposed to have originated spontaneously among satisfied employees who opposed a loss of wages caused by a misled minority, as they put it. Strangely enough, however, they were conceived and circulated in all General Motors plants still operating during the week ending January 8.

In contrast with the satisfaction of the petition-signers, a relief committee was formed three days after the plants closed, and the company issued a formal statement, requesting that merchants and finance houses show leniency toward men who were unemployed through no fault of their own. I wonder if Mr. Sloan will be late with his rent or miss a payment on his furniture.

Mr. Sloan has said that he will not jeopardize the rights of unorganized employees by agreeing to bargain solely with any one group. Just what rights he was referring to is beyond me. The petition-signers have only one right under their present form of bargaining: they do whatever the bosses tell them, and take any wages the company chooses to pay.

CLAYTON W. FOUNTAIN,
Member of the International Union,
The United Automobile Workers of America,
Detroit, Mich. and General Motors Employee.

Defining "Swing"

SIR: "The Spirit of Jazz" by Otis Ferguson [The New Republic, December 30] is truly a gem. I do not know whether Ferguson is a musician who is a good writer, or merely a good writer who knows his dance music. But he has beautifully put into words a non-material substance. I doubt if the general reader or even the aristocratic music lover caught the full significance of Ferguson's finer descriptions. As a former jazz bandsman (on small time) I certainly was propelled back into the esthetic joy of performance, and every phrase in the article hit home.

Ferguson rightly says "The term swing . . . no more definable than the term poetry," and I say the best definition I have seen to date is Ferguson's complete article.

New York City.

DAVID WEISMAN.

The Floundering Fathers

SIR: I am writing this letter to protest against the shocking and unconstitutional behavior of the United States government in its present flood-relief program. Certainly there has never been an attack upon our Constitution so subversive and insidious as this. Can there be any doubt—after the rulings of the Supreme Court in NIRA and AAA—that all flood-control measures, as well as flood relief, are unpardonable and dangerous violations of the principle of States' Rights? What causes has the United States government to interfere in the domestic affairs of Missouri, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arkansas or any other inundated state? If it is unconstitutional to assist an Ohio farmer when he is trying to raise a crop, is it not equally unconstitutional to assist him when his farm is washed away and he is floating on his house-top down to the Gulf of Mexico? Are we to split hairs? Are we to protect the Constitution in times of drought and undermine it in times of flood? I insist that no flood-control measures should be considered, and that all flood relief should be stopped, until the Supreme Court rules on this question of governmental authority.

The Court, I feel sure, will decide that the United States government has no right to control, restrain, impede or otherwise interfere with the flowing of the rivers of our several states. This may be upheld, not only on the principle of States' Rights, but also on the principle, as laid down in the opinion of the Court in its NIRA ruling, that it is an improper delegation of legal power. The authority of the United States over the waters of the Mississippi River and its tributaries does not begin until they have passed beyond the state of Louisiana into the Gulf of Mexico. This is obvious from the Court's statements concerning interstate commerce in the AAA decision.

The constitutional status of floods must not be impaired! Realiz-

ing that thousands of other American citizens must share these feelings, I propose to establish an organization for the defense of constitutional floods. All interested persons are invited to communicate with the writer at once. There are only thirty-six days left to defend the American way of flood. What are you going to do about it?

New York City.

HAMILTON BASSO.

The State Department and Brazil

SIR: In your correspondence columns there was recently [January 27] a suggestion that the State Department which took so prominent a part in barring aircraft for the Spanish government might also look into the Chinese civil wars and the military planes which were shipped there last year.

There is, it seems to me, another matter which is even closer to the State Department. On November 12, 1936, the State Department announced that it had signed an agreement with Brazil for the continuance of the military mission in that country. This means that four officers of the United States army are located in Brazil and work together there with the Brazilian general staff on all matters of military preparedness. A United States naval mission is also stationed in Brazil aiding in the training of Brazilian naval officers.

Aside from the contrast this presents to the Spanish action of the Department, it is interesting from two other angles. Brazil is virtually fascist today and we are official military and naval advisers and coaches to American fascism. Then, too, past experience shows that military missions are the best salesmen for the munitions industry of the country whence they hail. Is it too much to ask that the State Department ask for an immediate law banning such unneutral and warlike acts as military and naval missions?

New York City.

H. C. ENGELBRECHT.

The Russian Trial

SIR: The weight of the evidence does not seem to me to support one statement in your very careful editorial, "Another Russian Trial," in your issue of February 3. I refer to your comment on Mr. Walter Duranty's dispatches from the courtroom, and your statement: "and it seems to us that the weight of the evidence supports Mr. Duranty's view."

As one who had studied Mr. Duranty's dispatches on the current trials with care, I beg to differ with your conclusion concerning them. It has seemed to me that Mr. Duranty's dispatches have been filled with emotional generalizations and assumptions not properly based on available facts. The whole question of the function of a foreign correspondent at such an event as the recent Russian trials is raised by any discussion of this matter. I should object just as strongly to Mr. Duranty's dispatches were he to launch out and accuse the Stalinist government of fabricating confessions, without sufficient factual evidence to prove his statements, as I do to his method of endorsing the alleged confessions. . . .

We shall never know the complete truth about the Russian trials unless we gain access to the material brought out at the preliminary hearings under a judicial system where a man is only considered worthy of trial if he has already confessed or been forced to confess *in camera*. But factual reports of the material at hand and the presentation of whatever can escape censorship would be more valuable than lurid statements of the particular reporter's innate biases.

New York City.

M. R. WERNER.

SIR: If The New Republic in its editorial on the Moscow trial is, by contagion of contemporary example, confessing:

1. That the trial is even more "unbelievable" than the last.
2. That still "... it seems ... the weight of the evidence supports Mr. Duranty's view" (*i.e.*, the accused are guilty).
3. That "such an investigation as Trotsky demands . . . is unlikely to have any value if it were [held]," then I want to accuse The New Republic of what it has not yet confessed to: first, illiberalism.

It takes no great training in liberal critical methods of analysis to see that belief in what is "unbelievable" is possible only on a

partisan basis. It takes a good deal of training in partisan analysis to hold that because additional investigation might not conclusively determine some question, such investigation should not be held. The liberal position traditionally bases itself on the analysis of facts from more and not less investigation.

And what does The New Republic confess to in the conclusions it draws from the trial? Confusion so confused that it is impossible to identify its partisanship.

You say: "... the world is divided into two camps, fascist and democratic, and ... democracy is fighting for its life." You say: that the whole episode "... reveals the value of free political expression for opposition views under the forms of political democracy as a safeguard against plotting of this sort."

Does this mean (1) that Stalin is a democrat? and that the accused belong to the fascist half of the world? (2) That Stalin is a fascist and that the accused belong to the democratic half of the world and are fighting for the right of political expression for minority groups?

New York City.

WELDON BURKE.

[Our editorial of course was not intended to mean that we took our opinions ready-made from Mr. Duranty, but that on the whole we agreed with him.

There are two broad aspects of democracy, political and economic. Soviet Russia has the second, but not the first. It nevertheless is a part, and an important part, of the anti-fascist front.—THE EDITORS.]

To Aid Spanish Democracy

SIR: The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, with offices at 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City, is a delegate body composed of representatives from fifteen national organizations aiding Spanish democracy.

May I ask that your readers who wish effectively to aid in the struggle against fascism and in the preservation of democracy in Spain send their contributions to the North American Committee?

You will be interested to know that we are receiving contributions every day not only from our organizations, but from individuals who wish to have a share in the struggle against fascism, as for example, a check which has come to us within the last few days for \$1,000 from a man in Chicago who had inquired where his contribution would do the most good.

FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL, Chairman,
HERMAN F. REISSIG, Executive Secretary,
North American Committee
To Aid Spanish Democracy

New York City.

Governor Chandler and the Miners

SIR: Kentucky trade-union members now have a different idea about Governor A. B. Chandler's labor record from that of Edward F. Prichard, Jr., who protests in your February 10 issue against your criticism of Chandler for not pardoning the remaining life-termers in the Harlan County coal-strike cases. Chandler's attitude toward labor is indicated by his refusal to include in the special legislative session, as labor urged, the bill designed to ban deputizing of private hired mine guards.

It is true, as Mr. Prichard states, that Governor Chandler's decision on the Harlan cases was not final, and that he told the defense to "bolster up your record and I'll consider the matter further." But a few days later he was sending out *printed* postcards saying: "The conviction of the Harlan miners was sustained by the Court of Appeals. There has been no miscarriage of justice. I gave careful consideration to the case, and under the circumstances do not feel justified in showing executive clemency."

This certainly does not denote an open mind. Mr. Chandler asserts that "there has been no miscarriage of justice," without having studied the record of the various trials in the Harlan cases. It would have been physically impossible for him to have read that voluminous record in the time available. If he had, he would know there was flagrant perjury by prosecution witnesses. Thus a man swore in one trial that Chester Poore, defendant, was *short*, and in another trial that he was *tall*.

New York City.

CHARLES E. CLIFT JR.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

A report of the help being given Spanish refugees inside the French border is sent us by Charles Recht, 10 East Fortieth Street, New York City, the American representative of the International Bureau for Asylum and Aid to Political Refugees. Refugees at Bayonne, Hendaye, Dax and Mont-de-Marsan are housed in school buildings, hospitals or homes and their meals provided for both by the town government and individuals. But help is still needed, and Mr. Recht asks that funds be sent to him.

Dr. A. Wolfson, chairman of the Inter-Professional Association of Northern New Jersey, writes that the Reverend S. Hamilton Garner was tried by the trustees of the Universalist Church of the Redeemer on charges of belonging to the American Civil Liberties Union, a "radical communist group." The trustees passed a resolution to oust Dr. Garner. Another protest on the same case comes from Jane Romaine, president of the Association of Workers in Social Agencies, in Newark.

Jacob Heller of Dorchester, Massachusetts, writes that religious freedom for the non-Zionist Jews in Palestine as well as the Arabs should be guaranteed by the Royal Commission, and that equality between Orthodox and Zionist Jews should be recognized.

The Irish Republican Congress has formed a volunteer contingent to aid the Spanish Republic, as a reply to the Irish fascist intervention, and a step toward an anti-fascist united front in Ireland, Gerald O'Reilly writes us. From Spain we hear that scores of Irishmen are already fighting for the loyalists. Daniel Udoney of Staten Island denounces the fascist Blueshirt movement in Ireland aiding the Spanish rebels, saying it is largely due to clericalized clergy and press.

Alan Haven criticizes Paul Rosenfeld's article on the surrealist exhibition in The New Republic for January 6, saying that Dada was the outgrowth of reaction to the World War. He defines surrealism as the synthesis of reality with unreality and believes that its popular appeal is the proof of its significance.

The American Society for Technical Aid to Spanish Democracy, Room 70, 31 East Twenty-seventh Street, New York City, asks for contributions to send American workers to Spain to take the place of Spanish factory workers, thereby releasing them for military activity.

Floyd C. Kaylor, Blaine, Washington, writes us that years of experience with organized labor have convinced him that it has not the vision to solve our social ills, and urges us to swing more to the Left editorially, without expecting the average union man to follow.

Rudolph Gilbert comments on the letter by William Saroyan in the issue of December 30 that Mr. Saroyan is a conceited young man, though entertaining, and should read some of the books we selected as outstanding. Fred Johnson's comment is that Hollywood is where Mr. Saroyan belongs.

The recent conference of doctors and other scientists in New York on Contraceptive Research and Clinical Practice is applauded as a step forward in public education by I. L. Dworan of New York City.

What's on the Air?

William Green, Matthew Woll and other A.F. of L. officials discuss "Labor and Legislation." Saturday, February 13, 4:30 P.M., CBS.

Dr. Clyde Fisher, director of the Hayden Planetarium, assembles some of the evidence bearing on the question, "Do Sunspots Cause Floods?" Saturday, February 15, 5:30 P.M., CBS.

President Roosevelt, Vice President Garner, Senator Robinson and other administration notables speak at a testimonial dinner to James A. Farley, which is to be broadcast by both the Columbia and NBC-Blue networks from 10 to 11 P.M. on Monday, February 15.

Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace is chief speaker on the National Farm and Home Hour. Tuesday, February 16, 12:30 to 1:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Problems of contemporary youth form the discussion topic at America's Town Meeting of the Air. Thursday, February 18, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Training of the Artist

IN FEBRUARY, 1914, on the eve of his departure for Palestine, George Moore wrote to his friend Edouard Dujardin: "I leave Marseilles by the 'Macedonia' for Port Said, bound for the land of camels and concubines. I have ordered 50 of the first, and 500 of the others."

The remark is as characteristic as it is amusing. All his life, Moore delighted in shocking his friends and acquaintances with tales—often exaggerated, occasionally obviously untrue—of his amatory prowess: so much so, in fact, that by many people, and especially in view of his habitual mendacity, he was almost totally disbelieved. Mr. Hone, in his altogether delightful and extremely witty biography,¹ puts that matter right, along with many others. Moore's love affairs may not have totaled 500, but they were numerous, and they were actual; and Mr. Hone, wherever possible, has been specific about them. Stella, for example, really existed; and it is a comfort to know that there was *some* basis for the story that Moore, asked at a dinner party if he had known John Oliver Hobbes—Mrs. Pearl Craigie, who had died some years before—replied loudly—"Naturally. She was my mistress!" One of the stories, incidentally, which did much to give him the reputation, among the really *nice* ladies of Chelsea and Kensington, of being an "odious person."

But this, after all, is only to regard the more superficial and merely amusing implications of the camels and the concubines. What lies behind, and is both more interesting and more important, is a characteristic feature of Moore's life, and one for which the casual observer and reader is hardly prepared: namely, that Moore had the true artist's genuine and self-sacrificing devotion to his art, that he gave up his whole life to it, and that he was not afraid to endure the extremes of hardship for it. Physical courage, one would have thought offhand, was not likely to be one of Moore's salient features, but it becomes obvious that it was. He was a fearless rider to hounds, speaks laconically of riding with a boot full of blood, and it turns out to be all of a piece with his character that at the age of sixty-two he should set out alone on a journey to Palestine, where he spent whole days in the saddle, noting the landscape and all that might be of use to him for "The Brook Kerith." He would leave nothing to chance, nothing to inspired improvisation, he must know the facts, must document himself with the utmost of care; not necessarily from books, for, as Frank Harris noted, "Moore will not study, and cannot read authorities; yet he is industrious in his own way. His method of writing is laborious in the extreme. Before beginning he makes a scenario, divided into chapters, then he writes the book hastily chapter by chapter, putting in all his chief ideas; finally he goes over the whole book, rewriting it as carefully as he can." And what he could or would not look up for himself, he set his friends, or other qualified experts, to doing for him; so that there should be no howlers, for example, about the habits of the clergy in 1200, as reported in "Héloise and Abelard"; nor about seventeenth-century music and modern opera as repeatedly evoked and described in "Evelyn Innes." As Mr. Hone justly remarks, "'Evelyn Innes,' his later musical novel, is convincing as few musical

novels by non-musicians have ever been. It is not only the almost complete absence of slips which is remarkable, for Moore always took enormous pains over the background of his stories and was adept at picking the brains of others; but there are many passages which persuade the reader that he really understood something of the subject." And this despite the fact that there is considerable evidence that Moore had no ear at all, and that his interest in music was mainly "literary."

Inexhaustible patience, endless hard work, plenty of courage—but these qualities would have done little for Moore had he not also had the *sine qua non* of the artist, a profound and true humility, with a searching self-critical eye and a passionate absorption in learning and *willingness* to learn. Wilde, whose quip about Moore's excited successive discoveries of grammar, the sentence, and the paragraph, is well known, also once remarked of him that "He conducts his education in public." Which caused Robert Ross to reply—"Well, the public pays for it. They have a right to know how he is getting on!" Amusing enough, and Moore's mistakes were sometimes very funny, but the important thing is that he was not *afraid* to make mistakes, nor to correct them. He had made it his business to learn how to write, and nothing was to be allowed to stand in the way—friends, money, social position, nothing. Not even his own vanity. One can have little but admiration for the man who could write, as Moore did to his brother Maurice in 1890: "I do not think I shall do anything of real value. The others delude themselves, they confuse temporary reputations with the real reputation that time grants slowly but always with inflexible justice. The fools quarrel as [to] whom they should sit next to at the author's dinner. I see over the heads of such possible vanity, I have the sentiment of great work but I cannot produce it. *Voilà ma confession*, what I strictly believe to be true." Perhaps he underestimated himself—it is too soon to say. He may live only, or largely, by the autobiography—which Austin Harrison once described invidiously as "the great work of a little man"—but one suspects that he will do better than that. Profound he may not have been, but he was a wonderful observer, and a witty and civilized one; he was not afraid to bring back poetry into the novel—*genuine* poetry—nor *genuine* bawdry either; nor a sense of style; nor a sense of form. And, apart from his existence as an artist, one must read Mr. Hone's extremely engaging biography to realize what a naughty and mean and selfish but essentially single-minded and *delightful* person Moore must have been.

Mr. Masters' book² is quite at the other end of the spectrum. The autobiography of a naïf, it has the virtue of being superlatively and unblushingly honest. It is a curious and in some ways a tragic career which Mr. Masters sets down for us—the career of one who had a passionate *desire* to become an artist, and who struggled heroically against environment and circumstance to do so, but who lacked, unlike Moore, the self-critical and self-refining eye which alone could have made it possible. Genius he had, for a moment—the sort of genius which almost seems to come from "outside"; but the sustaining wings of art he never acquired. A melancholy, and often a grim, story, but one which no one should miss.

CONRAD AIKEN.

¹ The Life of George Moore, by Joseph Hone. New York: The Macmillan Company. 515 pages. \$5.

² Across Spoon River, by Edgar Lee Masters. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 426 pages. \$3.50.

Streamlined Gibbon

The Hundred Years, by Philip Guedalla. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 414 pages. \$3.

MR. GUEDALLA'S latest work is in the best sense a survey. His subject is the hundred years since Queen Victoria's accession on June 20, 1837. What he has attempted is a description of "the leading moments of the century as they affected the leading units of the Western world." To the surveying of this crowded prospect he brings the selective eye of the novelist and the scrupulous regard for detail of a conscientious historian with a reputation to sustain. While focusing our attention upon fourteen crucial years of that century, and then treating of those years in a total of thirty-three scenes, he bridges the intervals by borrowing the technique of the Proustian flashback-and-forth. The result is not, of course, a recapturing of time past: there is no such alchemy. Rather, it is a refreshing preamble to the news of the day.

Refreshing, because it is no part of the author's intention that we should go into his historical cyclorama for the pleasure of hissing contemporary villains who have been loosely disguised for the occasion in the trappings of their predecessors. Or to put it another way, Mr. Guedalla is no doctrinaire; he never indulges in specious analogies; and despite his mastery of metaphor, he has kept himself laudably free from metaphorical thinking. Witness his remark apropos of Nazism, that "armed demagoguery is rather a disease to which democracies are subject than an alternative and distinct system of government. The recorded symptoms are a party tyranny and a complete elimination of freedom, a prolongation of the wartime omnipotence of the state, and a systematic concentration on the mind of youth." Or better yet, take the conclusion to his analysis of European affairs at the close of 1848:

... On every side that autumn Europe was under authority. Cavaignac ruled France; Windischgrätz held down Vienna; Jellacic had the Magyars by the throat; and Radetzky's guns boomed across Italy. It was a time of swift and pitiless dictatorship triumphant almost everywhere in Europe; and it would seem more natural to remember 1848 for its dictators than for its revolutions. For all its revolutions seemed to fail, leaving a formidable row of dictators installed in more or less comfort and apparent permanence. Yet their names are strangely faded, since their work left hardly any trace. In spite of all contemporary appearances there are few names more shadowy than Cavaignac and Windischgrätz for the simple reason that dictatorship is only a device by which an air of permanence is lent to temporary retrogressions; and nations rarely take pleasure in recalling those by whom their retreats have been conducted. For dictatorship is oddly mortal; but the revolution lived.

Mr. Guedalla, then, is perfectly aware that the long course of human history is not shaped by glittering or resonant individuals. But neither does he lose sight of the fact that social and economic forces are not entities in themselves, flowing and swelling like the tides of ocean in obedience to lunar—or lunatic—impulses beyond human control. And this tough-mindedness of Mr. Guedalla's is the more noteworthy because the metaphorical thought-process has been peculiarly difficult for recent interpreters of his chosen epoch to avoid.

It is the reviewer's pleasant duty to add that he has combed this book for minor flaws, and has been struck instead by its major virtues of clarity and precision. If your

sense of the immediate past has grown a little dulled by the impact of current events, read "The Hundred Years" and sharpen your wits against Mr. Guedalla's.

GEORGE LIBAIRE.

Behind the Four Horsemen

Invasion, by Maxence van der Meersch. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. New York: The Viking Press. \$3.

ONE READS this book with a sense of terror; one lays it down with a feeling of weariness, of frustration. A war novel, a good one, about the population in Northern France behind the German lines; with never a shot fired on the scene; but with red sky at night, and the sound of cannon like never ending thunder, and the awfulness of Ypres not many miles away. And here uncertainty, insecurity, fear of coming hunger. The great weaving mills of Lille and of Roubaix have all shut down. The men are away fighting on the other, on the French side; or have escaped somewhere; or have been hidden in the attic (some stayed so hidden through the four years of the War). The women, the children, the old people remain; and the business men remain, the manufacturers, the merchants, the municipal officials. The army of occupation is quartered on the country; on each farm, in each village home there are German soldiers, strange males, sleeping, breathing in the room beyond: propinquity breeds physical attraction: a couple pairs off; later there are half-French, half-German offspring. The patriots curse: Woe to the traitors when the French troops return.

But it seems as if the French troops will never return. The War goes on forever. There is no more food. Industrial life is disorganized. Business lies low. Then on the other side of the ocean relief committees are formed, and food is sent into the occupied territory. Here is a business. The officials, the merchants fall to. They are the country's elite; so they distribute the food, have the bread adulterated, steal the canned milk, fake the accounts, divert the money payments, and pay off grudges. The few honest ones among them have no one to appeal to. The German authorities are not interested. What they want is submission and order.

There is order; most of the population is too weak from hunger to rebel; and there is at least outward submission. But in the mind of those of good will there is the hope that when the nightmare is over, when the French will return, there will be justice and there will be retribution. But there is not. When what has seemed eternity does end, when the Germans retreat and the French troops come back, not those who were most loyal are rewarded, but those who are most scheming and loudest. And even the ones who through the privation of the long prison-like days thought that at least their own minds were cleansed and their motives had become pure, realize when normal days return that to exist they must swim with the tide, must continue plundering, or they will sink, be submerged.

The book is factual and has no main characters. Chapter by chapter it enters the various homes, disorganized by war and invasion, and describes the interiors and the action. It does not explain. It is horror-reading because the facts are horrible. The author does not question the system that produces the madness called war, that not only murders combatants, but starves children and degrades whatever nobility of mind mankind has produced. The author accepts the social system and the division into classes and writes from within that acceptance. One reads the book as one reads a dispatch in The New York Times describing a great

disaster minutely, with all the details. Unless one has one's own explanation, one is likely to hurry into bed, pull the covers over one's head, shake with fear, and think: "What a terrible world!"

NATHAN ASCH.

Confessions of a Compromiser

The Great Russian Revolution, by Victor Chernov. New Haven: Yale University Press. 480 pages. \$5.

IN THIS profoundly interesting book, Victor Chernov makes the most substantial non-Bolshevik contribution to the history of the Russian Revolution. It is totally different from Miliukov's stupid and pedantic prejudices or Kerensky's hysterical but calculatingly dishonest effusions. The book is in a sense an *apologia pro vita sua*, for Chernov was leader of the Social Revolutionary Party, which had an overwhelming majority in the early Soviets and in the Constituent Assembly. Chernov indulges in some self-criticism and throws some new light upon his activity; but his role remains a sorry one. For while he saw more clearly than his comrades, he was unable to dominate his party or events, making eternal and disastrous compromises and evading all decisive issues; he was a "practical" man who condemned as a "sectarian" the man who was calling into being the greatest mass movement in history—Lenin. But Chernov's story of events is much superior to the part he played in them.

The minor merits of the book are many, among them considerable new material and excellent pictures of Kerensky, Miliukov and the Kornilov revolt, and especially of Kerensky's tortuous and self-defeating double-dealing in that revolt, his willingness to see the Soviets massacred, and his turning against Kornilov only when it became clear that he, too, might be massacred. But the major merit of the book is the description of the forces that inescapably doomed the bourgeois-Menshevik-Socialist government and brought the Bolshevik conquest of power. Chernov speaks contemptuously of the Bolsheviks, yet in all fundamental respects his analysis, made almost twenty years later, agrees with that made by Lenin and Trotsky during the revolution itself.

The fundamental factor in the situation, according to Chernov and the Bolsheviks, was the refusal of the Menshevik-Socialist majority to assume power and, instead, their turning the power over to a tiny bourgeois minority. That majority, says Chernov, felt a "repulsion" for power and dreamed of becoming an opposition in the West European sense. The results were disastrous. Bourgeois ministers, even in the coalition government, prevented all progressive action. The Menshevik Minister of Labor was permitted to do nothing and did nothing, says Chernov, except urge the masses to "maintain self-discipline and self-restraint" at a time when employers were opposing the most elementary labor reforms, locking out the workers and sabotaging production. Chernov himself, while Minister of Agriculture, was not permitted to carry out minor agrarian reforms and spent most of the time preparing an elaborate "land reform" for a constituent assembly that, he says, was postponed with "depressing regularity," while the peasants moved toward seizure of the lands and were met with violence by landlords and generals. Chernov's conclusion is now the one the Bolsheviks made at the time: "The coalition government proved incapable of digging a channel for the labor movement. It was even more helpless in formulating an agrarian policy"—and the agrarian question was crucial in the revolution. The army was demoralized by the gov-

ernment's war and foreign policy, and in this connection Chernov utters the only good words he has to say about the Bolsheviks:

The Bolsheviks showed that a revolutionary army could be led only by *going ahead of it* in the revolutionary process; excesses of revolutionary zeal injured the army less than attempts to halt the revolutionary process.

Chernov might have added that a revolutionary party could govern only by "going ahead" of the revolutionary process. That is what the Bolsheviks did, while the Menshevik-Socialists, in Chernov's own condemnatory words, "put on the brakes" both in the Soviets and in the government. Chernov favored an all-Socialist government (excluding the Bolsheviks!) but he fails to understand that the defeat of his proposal was part of the historical process which transformed the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution.

Russia was broken in pieces. The Bolsheviks took power and proceeded to put the pieces together again to form a new, socialist pattern. Chernov condemns them for doing it. Yet the only alternative to the Bolsheviks, as appears from Chernov's own analysis, was a sort of Russian fascism. There was a group and two newspapers, of increasing influence, that, according to Chernov, "preached a kind of Russian 'Hitlerism' . . . a demagogic, thoroughly false and adventurous 'national socialism.'" The significance of that has been neglected by historians of the Russian Revolution. If the Bolshevik conquest of power had not come, "Hitlerism" might have seized power because of the breakdown of all government authority, the wreckage of the country and the desperation of the people.

Chernov denies that Lenin acted as a Marxist. He has either forgotten or never knew that Marx in the Germany of 1848 urged transformation of the bourgeois democratic revolution into a proletarian socialist revolution. And that in 1850, when it appeared that the German revolution might revive, Marx issued three directives: distrust and oppose the new revolutionary bourgeois government; set up alongside of it the "workers' own revolutionary governments, whether in the form of municipal committees, municipal councils or workers' clubs or workers' committees," and "make the revolution permanent until the possessing classes are driven from power, until the proletariat has conquered the state power." Marx anticipated the strategy and tactics of Lenin and Trotsky.

LEWIS COREY.

Slum Panorama

When Night Descends, by Edgar Calmer. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

A PANORAMA of city life as affected by poverty and unemployment. Tom Dogan, a carpenter out of a job, wins a raffle and swells the Dogan relief budget by fifty dollars. Thereafter, from nightfall until morning, we observe Tom and his family against a background of slum tenements, saloon brawls, prostitutes' alleys, burlesque theatres and shooting galleries. Tom, we find, prefers drink to the company of his bedridden wife. Ray, their daughter, escapes loneliness and unhappiness by falling in love, and her brother, Bud, after yearning for distant places, turns to communism.

Throughout, Mr. Calmer's slum panorama overshadows the Dogans as an argument against the misery and oppres-

sion of their lives. As a method, that is praiseworthy enough. But it is the kind of argument that depends for the burden of its proof upon its examples—and as examples of their background, the Dogans are unconvincing. Their characters do not seem to have been shaped by their poverty, which merely functions as local color. They might be typical of a variety of more conventional settings and conditions. Ray, in the emptiness of her life and its fulfilment in love, might as readily be a Park Avenue heiress as the product of a home-relief slum. Tom is a drunkard no less characteristic of temperance melodrama than he is of unemployment, and Bud, as he turns to Marxism through his disgust with a burlesque performance and a penthouse party, lacks proof and certainty as an example of a life that has found its purpose.

CHRISTOPHER LAZARE.

Sugar

Can Industry Govern Itself? An Account of Ten Directed Economies, by O. W. Willcox. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 285 pages. \$2.75.

THE SUGAR industry is a classic example of mankind's collective stupidity. Sugar can be produced cheaply and abundantly (from cane) in tropical countries; in temperate countries, sugar can be produced (from beets) only at an excessive cost. Under the successive consequences of protectionism, wartime scarcity, subsequent overexpansion, the insatiable drives of vested interests in beet farms and sugar refineries, economic nationalism and the great depression, sugar has now reached an ironic development. In countries where it can be produced only at high cost, production, even for export, is maintained and subsidized. In countries where cane sugar can be produced cheaply and efficiently, such as Java and Cuba, production has been sharply curtailed. The consumer contributes heavily to make this possible, and subsidizes the use of sugar in other uneconomic forms—in Australia, in marmalade for export, in Brazil, in alcohol for motor fuel. In Italy, both sugar and motor fuel sell at many times the world price level, and per-capita consumption of both is correspondingly low.

Mr. Willcox's primary interest is in the varying mechanisms developed to prorate sugar production among established producers, fix or regulate prices, and handle export dumping and subsidy operations; ranging over cartellization, legislation and international agreements. In the ten countries surveyed, he finds a general pattern of such action. This pattern he proposes as the "social-economic" solution to the ills of the industrial order.

The book is journalistic and readable; the attitude is uncritical, except toward the United States. Everything that his own country has attempted to do for sugar is, to Mr. Willcox, necessarily clumsy and pointless. Apparently he bases that judgment largely on hearsay, for he ignores many elements of our sugar program. For example, after lauding the Australian efforts to protect sugar laborers, he says they were far more humane than the "Agricultural Adjustment Administration of the American New Deal, which took into consideration no interests but those of landowners." In fact, the Jones-Costigan Act paid special attention to labor; and under the AAA sugar contracts, child labor was abolished in the beet fields, and the pay and working conditions of the workers were given positive improvement. Further, the American sugar program helped sugar producers here without accentuating the difficulties of sugar producers elsewhere. By checking the rapid expansion of sugar production in our insular areas, and open-

ing our doors to more Cuban sugar, we reduced the international surplus and created a situation in which an international sugar agreement might be more effective. Such far-seeing policies are ignored by Mr. Willcox.

Governor Landon recently said, "I know that above all else they [farmers] want no system for penalizing plenty and rewarding scarcity. The American farmers want to produce without fear." When the Governor made that statement, he little realized that it was not the New Deal, but the capitalistic system itself, that penalized plenty and rewarded scarcity. Mr. Willcox describes how an industry can use that principle for its own benefit. But as to the larger issue, how industry might be organized so that increasing technological efficiency could be utilized to provide better standards of living—increased consumption—for all workers and consumers, he is completely silent.

Can industry govern itself? That depends on the objective. Can an industry govern itself for its own maximum profit? Mr. Willcox answers "yes." Can industry govern itself for the general welfare? The worldwide experience in sugar yields a resounding "no."

MORDECAI EZEKIEL.

Books in Brief

Almanac for New Yorkers: 1937, compiled by Workers of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration in the City of New York. New York: Simon and Schuster. 128 pages. 50 cents.

From the vast and varied fund of historical and statistical material that has so far been gathered by researchers on the Federal Writers' Project for use in the forthcoming "New York City Guide Book," a group of the project's editors have winnowed a quantity of interesting and entertaining facts and fancies, gagged them up to the hilt, added topical jingles, and here present the whole in almanac form. Embellished with excellent vignettes by workers on the Federal Art Project (notably Estaban Soriano), it is an able production that can take its place as a waggish shelf-fellow of "The World Almanac." But, being intended as no more than "a kind of jolly-boat to that sober-sided leviathan, the "New York City Guide Book," its displacement is naturally small. Moreover, it is launched at a time when WPA projects are under the threat of drastic curtailment, and thus may prove inadequate to carry much indication of the very real value of the work-in-progress of the Federal Writers' Project in New York City.

C. B.

Rebel in Bombazine: Memoirs of Malwida von Meysenbug, edited by Mildred Adams. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 315 pages. \$3.50.

Malwida von Meysenbug found it bliss to be alive in the brief revolutionary dawn of 1848. The only one of ten children of an aristocratic German family to break with the ancestral codes, she became a liberal, left the church to join the "free communities," taught in an advanced school for girls and escaped to England when the attentions of the police became oppressive. Here she knew intimately the exiles from many nations, including Kossuth, Mazzini and Carl Schurz, lived for years in the house of Alexander Herzen and brought up his daughters. Later in Paris she was the friend of Wagner and later still of the young Romain Rolland. Ardent for ideas and ideals, with a stalwart independence and sincerity, she was a fine example of the romantic idealists who thronged the radical movements

of the mid-century. Her Memoirs, banned in Germany today, reproduce the atmosphere of the old Germany and the struggle against political and intellectual absolutism as it involved her, and later the life of emigré circles in London.

C. G. S.

The Descent of the Idol, by J. Durych. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. \$2.75.

In so far as the historical background of Durych's work is concerned, Thomas Mann's comparison of it to "War and Peace" has some justification. Conditions in Bohemia during the first half of the Thirty Years' War, from the expulsion of the Winter King to the death of Wallenstein, are described with astonishing precision. Nature in its alternating moods of autumnal peace and winter storm is a musical accompaniment to the varying incidents of war. A multitude of characters drawn from the records flash before the reader on their way to death in battle or on the block. Foremost among them are Ferdinand II, the priest-ridden emperor, and Wallenstein, the soldier of fortune, who presented to the wonder of mankind a German version of that virtue of which Cesare Borgia was the classic model. But across this vast historical landscape trickles a love story of which the incidents and the psychology are equally preposterous.

R. M. L.

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Mr. Burluk, the outstanding figure in contemporary Russian poetry and the friend and teacher of all the great poets of modern Russia, including among others Mayakovsky, Chlebnikov, Aceev, Hoffman, says in reviewing this book:

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LECTURES

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Contributors

ABRAHAM EPSTEIN, author of "Insecurity: A Challenge to America" and other books, is executive secretary of the American Association for Social Security, Inc.

MARY HEATON VORSE has specialized as a labor reporter in the steel industry. She is the author of many books—most recently an autobiography, "A Footnote to Folly."

FRANCIS HACKETT, for some years an editor of The New Republic, is author of several books, including "Henry the Eighth," "Francis I" and a novel, "The Green Lion."

REXFORD G. TUGWELL recently resigned as Under-Secretary of Agriculture to become executive vice-president of the American Molasses Company of New York.

ARTHUR EBEL STEIG, a brother of William Steig the cartoonist and Henry Anton Steig the short-story writer, works in a New York advertising agency.

CONRAD AIKEN recently returned to this country after several years in England. His new book of poems, "Time in the Rock," was published last fall.

GEORGE LIBAIRE has translated the Memoirs of General de Caulaincourt, of which the second volume, "No Peace with Napoleon," was published last fall.

NATHAN ASCH is the author of several novels, of which the most recent was "The Valley." "The Road: In Search of America" will be published this spring by W. W. Norton.

LEWIS COREY is the author of several books on financial and economic subjects, including "The Decline of American Capitalism" and "The Crisis of the Middle Class." He edited, in 1918, "The Proletarian Revolution in Russia," by Lenin and Trotsky.

MORDECAI EZEKIEL has been economic adviser to the Secretary of Agriculture since March, 1933. He contributes to statistical and sociological journals and his latest book is "2,500 a Year—From Scarcity to Abundance," published last year by Harcourt, Brace and Company.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Carlton Brown, Clara Gruening Stillman and Robert Morss Lovett.

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